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THE TOWN OF ...

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SKETCHES

OF

THE LIFE AND TRAVELS

OF

REV. THOMAS <sup>W</sup>WARE,

WHO HAS BEEN

AN ITINERANT METHODIST PREACHER FOR MORE THAN  
FIFTY YEARS.

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WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

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REVISED BY THE EDITORS.

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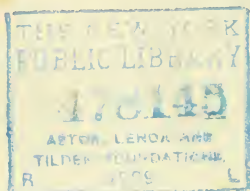
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**D. E. Pennepacker**

**DEC 5 1908**



## ADVERTISEMENT

TO

MEMOIR OF REV. THOMAS WARE.

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THE Rev. Thomas Ware is one of the oldest Methodist travelling preachers in the United States. He commenced his labours in early life, and is now more than eighty years of age. His connection with the work during the first stages of its progress, in this country, furnished him with an opportunity to collect many facts and anecdotes, calculated to illustrate the principles and spirit of Methodism in its primitive form. Nothing so happily illustrates the spirit and intrinsic character of a system of operations, in religion or other social interests, as a detailed account of the feelings, dispositions, and conduct of its devoted friends and advocates. If we would have a correct understanding of primitive Christianity, we should make ourselves familiar with the influences which everywhere, and under all circumstances, affected the first and most eminent Christians. So, also, if we

would have a correct knowledge of true primitive Methodism, the surest way to attain it is to become familiarly acquainted with the lives and conduct of its first and most eminent votaries. That influence under which an individual is led to persevere in a life of self denial and much labour for half a century or more, without turning aside at any time, must be presumed to constitute, in a very eminent degree, the principal element of his faith and practice. Hence are the biographies of the early Methodist preachers profitable to those who would imbibe their spirit and imitate their virtues—those who would be primitive Methodists—as well as interesting to all.

Although we could wish our much respected father in the gospel, the Rev. Thomas Ware, had preserved a great deal more of what passed under his observation during the early part of his ministry, we cannot but believe that many will be thankful for what he has furnished in the following pages. They contain many things calculated to impart instruction as well as edification; and through them this venerable man of God will speak to thousands after he is dead.

We deem it proper to say, in conclusion, that as it appeared desirable in publishing the work to preserve the auto-biographical form



in which it was furnished, although very considerable corrections were necessary to prepare it for the press, we have been at the pains of having the whole read to the author since it was corrected, so that it is published from the manuscript approved by him, without alteration. This was deemed necessary, as it contains historical facts and allusions which may in some future day be consulted for purposes of interest to the Church, when all will desire to be satisfied that the record is in his own words. We trust this little volume will be perused with much satisfaction by many, and be rendered a blessing to them.

PUBLISHERS.

## PREFACE

TO

MEMOIR OF REV. THOMAS WARE.

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THE writer of the following sketches has neither capacity nor disposition to employ his pen merely for the purpose of amusing his fellow men. But having been called, in the order of Providence, to act a part upon the stage of life at a period when every thing connected with the history of this great nation was stamped with interest, he may, without ostentation, perform the humble task of recording some things which passed under his observation, and thus preserving from oblivion incidents connected with those days, which might otherwise be lost.

In surveying the past, he has reason to regret that he has kept a record of so small a proportion of what might have been useful and interesting to posterity. But a conviction of the importance of making a register of every thing worth preserving, at the time, came too late. In regard to this, the writer has been guilty of a fault too common with the soldiers

of the revolution, and the first Methodist preachers in this country.

Still there were many things connected with his early experience, which, from their peculiar nature, or the circumstances under which they occurred, made an impression upon his mind never to be erased. This induced him to note them down at the time of their occurrence. From the scraps containing such notices, the following sketches are principally made out.

As it is the object of the following narrative to instruct, rather than amuse—to give correct information relative to the facts alluded to in it, rather than dazzle the imagination of the reader with an exhibition of marvellous events, the writer claims, as the chief merit of his production, strict fidelity to truth. He has recorded only what he has seen, and heard, and experienced.

If the work possess no other interest, it is believed that the circumstance of the writer's connection with the early Methodist preachers, and acquaintance with the history of the Church since its organization, will give it a degree of value in the estimation of many. The humble individual, who furnishes these brief sketches for the perusal of posterity, was a companion in labour and suffering with

the Methodist preachers of 1784. He was present at the Christmas Conference in that year, when the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States was organized. He has lived, however, to witness great changes. His "old companions dear" are all gone. He lives as in a new world; yet not new, because, though other men inhabit it, they are engaged in the same cause. Methodism, in its radical principles and prominent features, is the same as when the writer first entered the field. That it may continue so to the end of time, and equal the highest expectations of its early friends and advocates, as an instrument of spreading evangelical holiness through these lands, is the sincere prayer of

T. W.

*Salem, N. J., March 28, 1839.*

MEMOIR  
OF THE  
REV. THOMAS WARE.

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CHAPTER I.

Mr. Ware's account of his ancestors—His birth—Early religious training—Doctrinal views of his parents—Death of his father—Distress and gloom of his mother—Partakes of her spirit of despondency—Troubled with the subject of doctrines—Methodists begin to be talked of in that country—The minister of the parish induced, in consequence, to dwell largely on the doctrine of decrees—Attends school—Contracts a friendship for an eccentric schoolmate, and endeavours to shake off his seriousness—His friend endeavors to reason him out of his Calvinistic views, but to no purpose—Becomes less serious, and more fond of play—Anecdote of a preacher who revived the agitation about Methodists, by representing them as driven from England by their antagonists, and therefore flocking to America—Arminianism, not understood by those who were led to hold it a dreadful heresy—Doctrinal disputes among the people—Students who played at cards, and excused themselves when rebuked, by taking shelter under the doctrine of decrees—School broken up in consequence of the schoolhouse being burned—Mr. Ware returns to his mother, and aids her on her little farm—Greatly harassed again on the subject of doctrines.

My paternal grandfather was an Englishman by birth, and a captain in the British service under Queen Anne. I remember him well, as he lived until I was sixteen years old. His personal appearance was

fine, and his mind cheerful. The caresses, anecdotes, and lessons of instruction, received from him, are among my earliest recollections. He had high notions of liberty, and was the first man I ever heard eulogize the Indian character. Most people seemed to think the Indians ought to be exterminated.

When this venerable old man came to spend a few days with us, we were always delighted, and vied with each other in our efforts to please him. His company was interesting on account of the cheerfulness of his spirits, and the stories with which he was always ready to entertain us. He was in the habit, too, of advising my father with respect to the education of his children.— On this subject he used to say, the mind must be made strong as well as the body. Though minds differed—some being naturally stronger and others weaker—yet much depended upon management in their education. And in view of this, a beginning could not too soon be made to guard children against the fears which vulgar stories about ghosts, &c., were calculated to produce, and to store their minds with correct ideas. My grandfather lived to the great age of more than fivescore years. To his uniformly cheer-

ful temperament, as a means under God, I have always attributed his long life.

My maternal grandfather, whose name was Reed, I never saw. He was a native of Scotland. On his passage from that country, he was wrecked off the capes of Delaware, and lost all but his life. He reached the shore by clinging to some fragments of the broken ship, and was found nearly exhausted on the beach by a farmer, named Garrettson, who took him to his house. With this person, who rescued him from his perilous condition, he was contented to remain. He afterward married a daughter of his benefactor. He died at middle age, leaving a large landed estate, and a numerous offspring.

My grandmother Reed I knew well. She possessed fine powers of mind, and a happy faculty of communicating her thoughts. Although not very conversant with books, she knew much of the history of the world, and her conversation was always rendered interesting by her numerous anecdotes about former days, when the country was infested with beasts of prey and savage men. The young people were delighted with her society, and profited too, as she was accustomed, in entertaining them with her conversation, to draw many of her anecdotes from the Scrip-



tures, which she would tell in a soft and pious strain, that made an impression on my mind lasting as life. She was one of the few whose condition may be said to be enviable in old age. With intelligence and cheerfulness beaming in her countenance, and the law of kindness dwelling on her tongue, her last days were among her most happy days. Who that have had the pleasure of being conversant with such a person in the decline of life, have not felt a wish mingling with secret aspirations of the heart to God that they might live to be old, and their last days be equally tranquil and happy?

My father and mother were pious persons, and lived, while they were permitted to live together, in the fear of the Lord. But my father died in the prime of life—I think at about thirty-eight years of age. My grandfather Ware used to say that he was the kindest of all his sons. He was the only one of them who professed to know that God for Christ's sake had forgiven his sins. His mind was improved by considerable reading. Milton was his favourite poet; and persons of good taste were always delighted to hear *Paradise Lost* read by him. He loved his family much; and in the estimation of those who knew him best, he was considered one of



the most excellent men. These amiable parents taught me the fear of the Lord, by both precept and example. The whole deportment of my father tended to fix in me a habit of serious reflection on the subject of religion; and his triumphant death made an impression on my mind that time could not obliterate. He left my mother a widow with eight children, the eldest only seventeen years.

Respecting the date of my birth there is no authentic record, a part of the family register having been by accident so effaced as to render it illegible. For the only knowledge I have of it, therefore, I am indebted to the memory of my excellent mother, from whom I learned that it was the 19th of December, 1758.

Though my father and mother were both pious, they did not agree in their views of doctrine. My mother was a firm believer in the Presbyterian faith; but my father was not, and refused to join the church unless he could be permitted to think for himself on the subject of divine decrees. He believed, as my mother often told me, in the universality of the atonement; but, in compliance with her wishes, suffered me to learn the Larger and Shorter Catechisms. Alas! how many children are injured, and go halting all their days, for want of skilful nursing.

It had been usual for my mother, in my father's absence, to pray with her children morning and evening. But after his death she was tempted to abandon it. The scene was deeply afflicting. She collected her children, as usual, around her. While thus seated, eight in number, and the eldest only in her seventeenth year, she attempted to read, but could not. She sat and wept. My eldest sister at last said, "My dear mother, why do you weep?" "Alas!" replied she, "death has made you all orphans, and your mother a disconsolate widow. I am not worthy to fill the place of your excellent father. Had I been so, and you been dutiful children, we should not have been left in this forlorn condition. Go, my children, and pray for yourselves. These little ones, (meaning the younger four of the number,) I will take with me into my closet." On hearing these remarks from my bereaved and much afflicted mother, I arose quickly, went out into the field, and wept bitterly. I said to myself, It is doubtless as my mother has said; at least we have been naughty children.

No wonder that a providence so mysterious as the removal of my father in the prime of life, should deeply affect my poor afflicted mother. The gloom which hung over her

mind, occasioned by his death and her being left with eight young children, who were destined no more to see the smiling face or hear the charming voice of so kind and affectionate a father, was heightened by the doubts she often indulged about her own election, or gracious state, as she would express it. She was harassed with fears, that what she had fondly taken for saving grace, was nothing more than common grace.

About this time, a neighbour who had long been a communicant in the church had fallen into doubts respecting his election, and in his despondency had taken his own life. This man, she now concluded, had never been operated upon by any thing more than common grace. And it occasioned her much painful exercise and sore conflict of mind.

Listening to those who came to console my mother under the pressure of her grief and the doubts which were preying upon her feelings, a spirit of melancholy seized me, and I became subject to desponding fears. In this state I wandered in lowly places; and having heard that departed spirits did sometimes return as messengers of good to those they loved on earth, I often invoked my father's appearance, hoping that for the love he bore to us while he was with us, he would return and tell me

if my mother's name and my own were written in the book of life.

From this, some idea may be formed of the gloom cast over the morning of my days in consequence of my early instruction in the principles of the Calvinistic faith. There are some minds which cannot digest the doctrine of decrees as set forth in the system of Calvinism. And such was mine.

It was not long before the younger two of our family were taken away by death. As they died in infancy, there were no just grounds to doubt of their being happy. But to a mind exercised as mine then was, there was no satisfactory assurance of it; for, according to our creed, the condition of infancy could not be considered as a security against being finally lost. There were three, one brother and two sisters, older than myself; and none of these appeared to give themselves any uneasiness about our little Lydia and Enoch, whom we had followed to the grave, not doubting that they were with their father in heaven. Why it was that I alone should infer, from our common creed, that they were more likely to be in hell than in heaven, I am at a loss to conceive, unless Providence designed that I should be the means of bringing our family to embrace the doctrinal views of my

father, rather than those of my mother, who herself died in principle a Methodist. In the distinguishing features of my father's faith I was never instructed until I became a Methodist, and my mother's prejudices had somewhat subsided. She then told me that my father was a Methodist in his views, and, she doubted not, would have joined them, if he had lived to hear them.

When the Methodists began to be talked of in our section of the country, our minister, fearing lest their principles should be introduced and infect the minds of his people, was led to dwell largely on the doctrine of divine decrees, which, being opposed by some, occasioned much controversy among all classes.

At this time I was attending school. Among my school-mates was one, named Constantine, some years older than myself, for whom, notwithstanding some peculiarities of character which rendered him offensive to others, I contracted a strong attachment. He was ordinary in his person, and possessed great muscular strength. His genius was of the highest order,—especially in the study of the mathematics. By competent judges he was considered to possess a maturity of thought far above his years. His fellow-students hated him ; but it was probably because they



dreaded his wit and satire. They were cautious not to go too far, lest bruin, as they called him, would give them a deadly hug. By some, too, he was deemed as a prodigy of wickedness, because he did not believe in the decrees of God, as set forth in our Catechism and Confession of Faith. He had, what some thought, the audacity to say, that the time spent in learning them was worse than lost. This extraordinary young man, who was, in fact, a good-natured and fast friend, laboured hard to persuade me out of my Calvinistic views. But he could not succeed. Becoming weary, however, with my continued struggles of mind, and concluding that nothing was to be gained by self-consuming care, I made an effort to dismiss serious thoughts from my mind, and soon became as passionately fond of play as any in the school.

The noise about the Methodists had died away. For a considerable time little was said of them, except now and then a silly tale or groundless report was put in circulation respecting them. One of these was, that they preached that there were children in hell not a span long. This was stated in a circle of persons, all of whom, except one, were predestinarians. An individual remarked that it might be true; "but there are," said he, "two

kinds of Methodists ; the followers of Wesley, and those of Whitefield. The latter are predestinarians, and some of them do probably preach such doctrines ; but it ill becomes us, who are predestinarians, to circulate this tale.”

Soon after, a preacher of this class—one of the most rigid predestinarians of that age—came into the place, and revived the clamour against the Methodists. The story which was put in circulation was, that the two Mr. Hills, Richard and Rowland, had written them down in England, and that they were flocking to America ; and a clergyman of an adjoining parish, apprehending, as it seemed, that there was no time to be lost, commenced a course of sermons on the decrees of God, in which he extended their application to the falling of every leaf in autumn. He told the people that England was overrun with a set of wild fanatical heretics, who had revived the errors of James Arminius, and would, it was feared, inundate America with their damnable Arminian, Pelagian, and popish heresies. Many, however, were not very well pleased with the old gentleman's strong doctrine and harsh invectives.

As to Arminianism, they knew not what it meant, but thought it must be something very bad. Some, however, took the liberty to draw

their own conclusions from what the parson preached, and argued that if it were true, no one could consistently be blamed for any thing he thought, said, or did. During this agitation, a son of Col. S., one of the minister's principal parishioners, returned from college, with two of his fellow-students, to spend a short time at home. He and his companions were studying for the law. They attended church for two successive Sabbaths, and listened to the discourses of the preacher on divine decrees. On the following Sabbath, however, instead of attending service, while the parson was pursuing his subject in the church, they were playing at cards in a pleasant shade near it, without any apparent concern about being concealed from public view. Of this daring impiety the pastor was readily informed; and on the following day, in company with two of his elders, he waited on Col. S., whose son had evidently taken the lead in this open contempt of the day, the ordinances, and the minister of God. The clergyman opened the subject to the father; and the son was called in to answer for himself. The youth frankly confessed what he had done; and on being sharply rebuked for an offence so enormous and shocking to the moral sense of all good people, he boldly took refuge under the



doctrine taught him from the pulpit. "If your reverence please," said he, "the Lord made me to do this bad deed; and I hope you will excuse, or at least pity me—seeing it was from all eternity decreed;" and then drew from his pocket, and handed to the preacher, an abstract which he had taken of one of his sermons, in which it was affirmed that the decrees of God extended to all the actions of men. With this repartee the colonel saw that the parson was evidently embarrassed; nor could he relieve him other than by an exercise of his parental authority in reproving his son for being guilty of so wicked an act as playing at cards on the Sabbath, and obtaining from him a promise that he would not be guilty of the like again. But the son gave point to the whole, by begging of his father, in the most respectful manner, that he would forbear urging his demand with too much decision, lest he should be guilty of greater impiety, not knowing how the decrees of God might run.

This circumstance was a subject of much conversation in our neighbourhood. By some the young student was highly commended; and by others severely censured. Had those who applauded the boldness and intrepidity of the youth, laid the blame at the mi-

nister's door, as they ought to have done, and, in renouncing the doctrine he had taught, sought for the truth, it might have been a beneficial occurrence to them; but being led to suppose that what the minister taught, false and absurd as it appeared to them, was the doctrine of the Bible, because it was preached from the pulpit, some were led to think and speak lightly of that holy book.\*

The school-house in which I attended school when I contracted an acquaintance with the eccentric Constantine, whom I have mentioned, having been burned down, and the school thereby broken up, I was deprived of the means of regular instruction—there being no other one within my reach. My time was now employed in aiding my mother to cultivate her small farm; and, by the assistance she gave me, I improved some in reading. A code of laws drawn up by our excellent teacher, for the government of his pupils, and copied by my friend Constantine, I had carefully preserved; and also a fragment of my father's journal, when a school-boy. These

\* After a lapse of many years from this occurrence, I traveled the district embracing the place where it transpired, and inquired of an intelligent gentleman who belonged to the same church at the time, whether he recollected it. He replied that he did very well, and that the preacher immediately changed his course, and undid what he had done before.

were calculated to carry my mind back, and cause me to think of events that were past. Some of my first attempts at journalizing had also been preserved. As portrayed in these, I have often looked at myself with much interest, and viewed myself as a young immortal, left as it were alone, in search of intellectual food, or doomed to go without. The lower animals are instinctively directed to what is good for them, and select the nutritious from among the poisonous. Man has no such instinctive faculty to obtain what is needful for the mind. On the contrary, he too often shows the keenest relish for the deadly poison. I had indeed a pious mother; but her education was too defective in this respect, essentially to benefit me. Her thirst for Christian knowledge led her to read much; and she could read well. Her precepts and example were also highly instructive and beneficial; yet her occasionally pleading for the necessity of continuing in sin until death, and the like, by no means contributed to satisfy my inquiring mind. As she was deeply afflicted, however, and needed all the aid I could give her toward supporting the family, a sense of duty induced me to remain for a time with her.

## CHAPTER II.

Mr. Ware leaves his mother, and goes to live with an uncle—His uncle an irreligious and trifling man—Was brought to hear skeptical conversation among those who frequented his uncle's house—Was caressed by them, and much injured—The war breaks out—His feelings in favour of the revolution—He becomes ardent in the cause of freedom by reading—His uncle takes opposite sides—He leaves his uncle, and volunteers in the service—Reflects upon his course—Is carelessly exposed with the rest of the regiment at Perth Amboy, and threatened with punishment for his remarks on the occasion—Volunteers to reinforce General Washington on Long Island; but is prevented by the enemy, and falls sick at Powle's Hook.

IN my sixteenth year, my mother thinking she could spare me, I left my native town, and went to live with an uncle in Salem, N. J., about twenty miles distant. This uncle was an ingenious mechanic; and deemed, in the circle in which he moved, a ready wit.—But he was lax in his moral and religious principles. He was in the habit of indulging in sarcasms on all occasions calculated to call them forth, especially in reference to the institutions and habits of the people of New-England. He had made himself familiar with their history, and particularly detested their treatment of the Quakers; probably the more, because his mother was of that order; and their blue laws, as they were called, which he appeared to understand well, were particularly

offensive to his feelings, and the subject of his severest remarks.

My creed, also, which had so much bewildered my mind, but which I now began to trouble myself but little about, was often made the subject of my uncle's biting ridicule. Habitually listening to the skeptical conversations of those who frequented his house, and who appeared to be the gayest and happiest people in the world, I soon imbibed their spirit and sentiments, and joined with them in their merriment. Having learned some of their songs, and being favoured with a good voice, I was soon caressed by them, as being able to sing a good song, and say some smart things.

While I was residing with my uncle, the quarrel between us and the mother country became more threatening, and the alarm of war waxed louder and louder. I was young and ardent; and all my feelings were on the side of America. I was delighted, therefore, to hear the bold and unfaltering voice of the undaunted Henry raised in defiance of the sovereign who was endeavouring to crush us, and of his minions among us. Still more delighted was I when I learned that, seeing we must resort to arms in defence of our rights, the election for a commander-in-chief fell upon Washington, the youthful hero whose skill in

saving the vanquished army of the ill-fated Braddock was a pledge for his success when his country should need his services. Braddock's defeat was well understood, and much talked of; and in connection with it, the eminent skill displayed by young Washington in rescuing the army from being entirely cut off was familiar to all. I knew a man who had been a soldier under Braddock, and had heard him speak of Washington as every way superior, in person, demeanour, courage, and skill in war. In such a cause, and under such a leader, my ardent feelings inclined me to desire to serve my country.

The spirit of liberty was abroad. A sense of the rights of man with which the American people were imbued, had roused the people from their lethargy, and produced some of the greatest statesmen and heroes the world ever saw. The invincible spirit they manifested had spread itself among all classes, and agitated the whole civilized world. The general feeling which prevailed had some redeeming influence on me, as it directed my mind to a particular object. I had an ardent desire to peruse the news of the day, and this led me to improve in my reading. If I heard any thing interesting read in the periodicals of the day, I borrowed the paper and read it over



myself, while it was yet fresh in my memory, which aided me very much. The cause of freedom was advocated, too, by the free circulation of pamphlets, one of which was very popular, and had much influence on the minds of the people generally. There were doubtless some who did not approve of it; but they were silent. In all conversations among the people you would hear the measures of the British government toward this country condemned as arbitrary beyond endurance, and that we were justified in resisting them, and throwing off the yoke. The pamphlet which so ably advocated these views, as all agreed, I procured, and got persons to read it for me who could read well, and then read it myself, by which I continued to improve in the art of reading, and became more deeply imbued with the spirit of the revolution. I was at this time in the seventeenth year of my age.

An elderly man, having heard me say that I claimed to understand the principles of the revolution, and meant to be governed by them, inquired what they were. I replied, "Never to invade the rights of others, nor suffer others to invade mine, at the risk of life. But understand me, sir, I do not mean as a duellist, for no man in his individual capacity has the right of life and death;" and I proceeded to

explain an invasion of rights, as consisting in attempts to compel us to believe and act contrary to the dictates of our rational convictions.

When the struggle commenced, my uncle was on the side of America. But on the declaration of independence, he changed sides. Influenced by the views and feelings I have expressed, I left him, and volunteered as a soldier in the service. In seventy-six, I was one of the nine thousand quartered at Perth Amboy.

After I had enlisted, one said to me, "You are an adventurous youth—it is a desperate *cut*—independence or the halter." All seemed at first to agree in dispensing with such articles as were taxed, in a way, as they thought, to oppress the colonies. But they were not equally united in having recourse to arms in defence of their alleged rights. The chief difficulty seemed to be, a fear that we should not be able to contend with a power which we had been accustomed to consider invincible; and then, to those actively engaged in the conflict, it would probably be death instead of independence. This, I doubt not, led many to take neutral ground. But on such ground circumstances would not long permit them to remain. All who professed to occupy it were represented as disaffected, and constantly



pressed on the subject until many became really so, and went over to the enemy. Others pleaded conscientious scruples against bearing arms, and were excused on that account, though their property was laid under requisition to support the war. Having now abjured my king, and taken up arms against him, I had time to think and reason with myself on the part I had taken in this great national conflict; and some of my reflections I can never forget while memory lasts. The cause I held to be just. On this point I had no misgivings. But whether we should be able to sustain our ground, appeared to me a much more doubtful question. There must be, I was sure, much hard fighting, and many valuable lives sacrificed, to gain the boon of our independence, if we should succeed at last. And what will they gain, thought I, who fall in the struggle? The thanks of their country? No; they will be forgotten. But then the principles for which we were contending, it appeared to me, were worth risking life for. Our example would be followed by others, and tyranny and oppression would be overthrown throughout the world. Still the question recurred, "Can you meet the martialled hosts of the British nation—you, who know little or nothing of the arts of war, and

whose officers know not much more than yourselves—with any hope of success?" This was an appalling view of the subject. Yet, with the views I entertained of the justness of our cause in the sight of Heaven, I could not doubt, and resolved for one on liberty or death. "But there is a hereafter," was suggested to my mind. True, thought I, but I will do the best I can, and trust in God. And so it was, that as a soldier in the army I was more devout than when at home; and I prayed until a confidence sprang up within me, that I should return to my home and friends in safety, or not be cut off without time to make my peace with God.

After we had lain a short time at Perth Amboy, to make a show of our strength, as was supposed, our general reviewed us in full view of the enemy. As was expected by some, they opened their artillery upon us. Had their fire been directed with skill, many must have been slain. But they shot over us. Although none were injured, yet many were dreadfully frightened, and indignant at the officers for unnecessarily exposing their lives to such imminent hazard. This was indeed a useless exposure of life. To call out nine thousand men in full view of the enemy, and before their cannon, with only a narrow river

or sound, not exceeding, I think, two hundred yards, between them and us, was an indiscretion sufficient to alarm the soldiers. Still there was occasion enough to exercise us. Having been a lieutenant in a juvenile company, and taken much pride in studying the tactics of the field, I thought our officers blameworthy in neglecting to drill their men, unprepared as they appeared to be for the discharge of their duty. But instead of this, they permitted them to spend their time in running foot-races, wrestling, jumping, &c. By an inadvertent remark on this subject, I came near getting into a serious difficulty. I said our officers undoubtedly depended more upon our heels than our arms, alluding to our being indulged in running and jumping, rather than trained to duty. For this I was reprimanded, and threatened with an arrest.

After being quartered one month at Perth Amboy, I volunteered to reinforce Washington, on Long Island. We marched with all possible haste to Powles' Hook; but before we arrived, the British had got command of the Hudson River, and we were prevented from crossing over to Long Island.

After this forced march, the day being very sultry, and having no tent or quarters for the night, except a damp filthy hovel, I was seized

with what was called the camp fever. The physician pronounced it a hectic. Whatever it was, it cost me several years of the prime of my life.

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### CHAPTER III.

Gloomy aspect of affairs throughout the country—Soldiers refuse to continue in the service after their terms expire—Many leave—Mr. Ware leaves with the rest, but is unable to proceed far—Stops with a relative—Finds him a violent enemy to the revolution—Learns that Washington is on the retreat—Sets forward for West Jersey—Witnesses the distress of the people in flight before the enemy—Is insulted and abused at a public house—Suffers much in a snow-storm—Finds a friend, with whom he puts up—Is delirious by reason of his exposure and late sickness—Leaves his hospitable friends, with whom he is pressed to stay, and hastens home.

DURING the autumn of 1776, things wore a very gloomy aspect. The tempest of war had swept over the plains and heights of New-York, and then burst with impetuosity on New-Jersey, my native state. The continental troops could not bear up against the veteran hosts of the British army, by whom they were outnumbered more than two to one. The American army had been reduced much by various conflicts with the enemy: but what added to the causes of discouragement was, that the soldiers had become disaffected in consequence of their extreme suffer-

ings, especially for want of clothing : and an impression began to obtain among them that congress cared very little about their sufferings, and that there were too many in the national councils who cared as little about the independence of the country ; and as the term for which many had enlisted expired at that time, no persuasion could induce them to enrol their names again, or to postpone their return to their homes.

While such was the condition of the army, the enemy was advancing in triumph, and the people flying in consternation before them. There are many now living who have heard their parents tell of the scenes which then transpired—of whole families in flight—women and children homeless, in winter, hastening to make their escape, not knowing whither they went—men who had accumulated a competency forsaking their farms and effects, giving them all up to be destroyed, rather than remain to improve or protect them, with the enemy at their heels—there are many, I say, who have undoubtedly heard these scenes described ; but I witnessed them in all their horrors.

Of all wars a civil war is the worst ; and the revolutionary war had much of this character. The animosity between the friends



of the revolution and the British was great; but that between the friends and the enemies of the revolution—the whigs and tories—was greater. Some of the latter were violent and cruel beyond comparison. But for them our independence would have been accomplished with ease: and in consequence of what I had witnessed in the conduct of individuals who manifested so much hostility against those that were labouring to achieve our independence, I imbibed a settled aversion to them; but on my retiring from the camp, I became convinced that I had erred in supposing them all alike in this matter.

On leaving the army to return home, I found myself unable to keep up with my companions in arms, who had received their discharge, and were also returning to their homes; and I accordingly turned aside to spend a few days with a relative who lived a few miles from the main road. The man I had never seen, though I had seen his wife and daughter; nor did I know any thing of his views and feelings respecting the war. When I arrived, I was received with expressions of kindness by my relations. The sympathies of the mother and daughter were strongly moved by my affliction. During the absence of fever there was an unnatural paleness on

my countenance, which made me appear more like a dead than a living man ; and then, when the fever came on, being much bloated, a crimson hue flushed my cheek, which gave me the appearance of being in health. But the sudden transitions of these two extremes caused those who observed them to suppose me under the influence of a hectic fever.

The second day that I was with this family I overheard my cousin say to his wife, "This relative bears a remarkable resemblance to my aunt, his mother, and appears to be a kind, honest-hearted fellow ; and, though you have heard me say, rather than a rebel should escape I would turn hangman myself, he looks so much like my mother, and is so young, I should not like to put a knot about his neck ; but, as for the ringleaders of this nefarious rebellion, them I could hang with a free good-will." "O, Jacob," said his wife, "I fear you will yet bring ruin upon yourself and family." Through the kindness and importunity of this amiable woman and her daughter, my cousin was so far softened toward me as to manifest some tenderness ; and as I remained with them ten days, my health and spirits were much improved.

The following circumstances led to my sudden departure from this place:—While

walking in the woods one day, I saw a man pass with a horse, and heard him say, while viewing the animal, "Well, if the news be true, the money I gave the rebel isn't worth sixpence." I hailed him, and inquired if his horse was for sale. He said he was, for hard money. Having taken a few guineas with me when I left home, lest I should be taken prisoner and need them, I finally contracted to purchase the horse, saddle, and bridle, for all the hard money I had. I took the horse to the stable; but did not ask the man about the news of which I heard him speak. On coming into the house, my cousin met me at the door, with the newspaper in his hand, and said, "There, I always expected it would come to this. The rebel army is destroyed. Washington is on the retreat, and cannot escape. So, cousin, you will tarry with us and take protection. You are young, and may easily obtain a pardon. I will go with you to the British officer; and, if you have fears, we will take Eliza (his daughter) as your advocate." My feelings were not prepared for such a proposition; and, for a moment, I struggled between consternation and contempt. But soon my course was decided. The feelings of indignation, being roused in my bosom, flashed in my face.



When he saw this, he threw down the paper and went into another room. Eliza, I saw, was in tears; and her mother was absent with a sick neighbour. I walked several times across the room, and then went to Eliza, and giving her my hand, bade her adieu, adding that we should never meet again. I told her that I should go and see Captain Dubois; and, if the news were true, I should continue my course to West Jersey; but, if not, I might return, as I very much wanted to see her mother before I left. She was too much agitated to speak; but, after a while, became more calm, and desired me to stay until her mother should return. But I told her I could not delay; that her kindness, and that of her mother, I could never forget; and I hastened away.\*

\* The fears which I had overheard Eliza's mother express to her father that he would bring ruin upon his family, were, in a great measure, realized. When the British were driven from New-Jersey, he, in consequence of his violence against the American cause, was forced to flee, leaving his farm and possessions, which were confiscated. He went with his family to Nova Scotia, where, in a state of extreme poverty, he ended his days. O how often has my heart been pained for his amiable wife and daughter! After the war I saw a preacher from Nova Scotia, who knew the family. He said the climate proved too severe for Eliza's constitution, and she soon lost her sprightliness, and went into a decline. She, however, renounced the world, and gave her heart to God, and finally died, enjoying the consolations of religion. A more lovely and interesting sufferer, he said, he had seldom seen.

I found Captain Dubois making ready to move with his family to some place of safety, being quite sure that New-Jersey must fall into the hands of the enemy; so I set forward toward home. Fully to judge of my feelings, at this time, one must witness the scene I did, of distressed families in flight before the invading foe. The horror of the scene was heightened by the inclemency of the day. A chilling storm of rain, hail, and snow, which finally became a settled snow, rendered the day most dismal. About noon I halted at a public house to see if I could obtain some refreshment. The landlord inquired if I had any hard money; and, being informed that I had not, he gave me to understand that I could get no refreshment there. There was a number of persons collected at this place, who, it appeared, were greatly delighted with the news of the disasters which had befallen the army, and had come together to feast upon the miseries of their fellow-beings. They would call out to the distressed families as they were passing, curse them as fools and cowards, and tauntingly say, "If you are the friends of Washington, why do you flee from him—they say he is dodging among the hills off the road—can he not give you protection?" In the midst of these, cold, and hungry, and

sick, I endeavoured, for a short time, to obtain the benefit of the fire to warm myself. One of them addressed me, and said, "I perceive by your garb\* that you are a soldier. You have doubtless deserted your colours, and deserve to be hanged." "O," said another, sarcastically, "he is fasting and praying for kind death to come and save him from a British halter; do not disturb his devotions." A young man present interposed and said, "This is brutish. The young man does not think as we do; but he is a man, and, as such, he has a claim upon our humanity. If he will go with me to my father's house, he shall have what refreshment he wants, and be treated with civility." I, however, chose to proceed on my journey; and, having warmed myself, I shook the young man by the hand, and thanked him for his kindness, expressing, at the same time, a wish that he might never need a friend, and went on.

Night was now approaching, and the falling snow, darkening the atmosphere, rendered my lonely travel exceedingly dreary. I felt that I must have refreshment and a shelter for the

\* When I volunteered, at Perth Amboy, to reinforce Washington, on Long-Island, our ensign refusing to go, the colours were given me, as a reward for being the first to follow our captain, who was the first in the regiment that turned out and called for volunteers.

night, and saw I could not reach the place I had in view; I therefore resolved on calling at the first house which made a show of being a house of entertainment, and asking for shelter through the night. I was soon overtaken by a well-dressed, good-looking young man, who hailed me with, "Well, soldier, which way are you travelling in the storm?" "To West Jersey," I replied. "Are you lately from the army?" he inquired. I replied in the affirmative. "Have left it in disgust, I suppose," said he. "I have thought, sir," said I, "that the American people love their ease, their money, and their present safety, more than their liberty. I am, however, no deserter, the time for which I enlisted having expired." "New-Jersey," said he, "is doubtless lost; and with men of thought it is a plain case that independence cannot be sustained." I replied that it appeared doubtful; but had the friends of the cause shown that they were true to themselves, by furnishing the soldiers with such things as they wanted, and sending their sons to share in their toil and danger, instead of leaving them to hazard their lives and suffer for food and clothing, it might be otherwise. If they went on in this way, they would see who would defend their rights. For my part I meant to go home, and put off

the badge of a soldier. I then told him how I had been treated at the public house, and that I had not broken my fast that day. I perceived he viewed me with pity; and I asked him how far I must go to find a place of entertainment. "There," said he, pointing to a house in sight, "lives my father. You must go with me. My father is a friend to the king; but, whatever your sentiments may be, he will treat you with kindness." So I went with him.

It was time my day's journey closed, for when I lighted from my horse I could scarcely walk. Being chilled through with my long ride in the cold and snow, in my weak state of body, when I came into a warm room I soon became speechless, and on my countenance appeared the paleness of death. I was not, however, wholly insensible of what passed. And here again I witnessed the tender sympathies of kind-hearted woman. The mother and sister of my generous young friend became such to me, and exerted themselves to relieve me in my distress, as much as they could have done if I had been a son and brother. Revived by the cordial they presented to my lips, I could not help exclaiming, "I thought I was among strangers, but I have found a mother and a sister too." My clothes



were wet through to my body, and they furnished me with a dry suit. While putting them on, I thought I had erred in supposing that there was no virtuous sensibility in the hearts of those who were denominated tories, as the kindness I received from this family plainly showed. The father and son were royalists, but of the better sort, as I had good reason to suppose; though the mother and daughter sympathized with the friends of the revolution.

All the efforts of kindness on the part of these friends, however, could not save me from a chill. This was followed by a burning fever, which threw me into a delirium. In this state I imagined myself to be at the house I had left in the morning, and the daughter of my host to be my cousin Eliza. During the ravings which the paroxysm occasioned, as she was sitting near me, I reached out my hand and said, "See, Eliza, how my hand burns. But, Eliza, where are the old people? Will your father ever forgive me for having been in arms against his king?" The young lady saw I was delirious, and endeavoured to pacify me by saying, "My father loves the king; but he thinks well of Washington, and hopes when the Americans find that they cannot maintain their independence, they will

submit to honourable terms, and the king will make a great man of Washington." "But, dear Eliza," said I, "does your father think the king will pardon any of those who have been in arms against him?" Upon this the old gentleman replied, "O yes, he will pardon them all, and we shall all be friends again. The king knows he has dealt hard with the Americans, and he will yet do them justice." When I heard the old gentleman's voice, I knew where I was, and my reason soon returned. I then took some refreshment, and retired to rest.

Next morning the daughter told me the conversation that had passed the night before; and I informed her what my impressions were, and that I mistook her for my cousin, whose father's house I had left that morning. The old gentleman, who was present, said, "Young man, I was much alarmed on your account last night. I felt that I was a father, and thought what if this were my son, a youth far from home and in distress—I will do by him what I would wish another to do by my son in a similar case." And he concluded with some explanatory remarks on what I had said the night before, evincing the intelligence of his mind and the goodness of his heart. The young doctor who had invited me to his

father's house, and was probably the means of saving my life, insisted on my staying with them for a day or two longer; and such was the kindness of the family, that I cheerfully and thankfully consented. But the British army was approaching; and my own safety, and that of the generous family who had manifested so much kindness to me, rendered it expedient for me to depart without delay. I accordingly left them with many acknowledgments for their hospitality, and in a few days reached my native town, to the great joy of my mother and friends, who thought I was dead, or a prisoner, or perhaps had enlisted in the continental army. This latter, which my mother very much feared, would probably have been the case, had not my affliction prevented it, as a number of the officers endeavoured to flatter me into it, by promising that if I would join them I should have the honour of wearing a sword, and of being the youngest standard-bearer in the army. But Providence ordered it otherwise.



## CHAPTER IV.

Mr. Ware enlists again—Hears of the victory at Trenton—Is not called into service—Sick among strangers—Considers his country's cause as safe, and turns his attention to the state of his soul—Confused and perplexed with his doctrinal views—Expresses to his mother his doubts respecting his creed, which gives her much uneasiness—His faith becomes unsettled, and his mind troubled with infidelity—Restrained from gross vice by physical imbecility and checks of conscience—Mind much disturbed—Reads much, but to little purpose—Tempted to doubt Providence—Gloomy and desponding—Forms an acquaintance with a young man studying navigation, and enters into arrangements to pursue the study, and to go to sea with him in a vessel to be commanded by his brother—Providentially rescued, by being accidentally drawn to hear a Methodist preacher preach, under whose discourse he was much enlightened and strengthened to seek the Lord—Finds peace—Writes to the preacher—Reflections respecting Mount Holly, where he was converted—Anecdote of a Quakeress—Love feast.

I CONTINUED brooding over the gloomy destiny of my native state, in which all the horrors of war were experienced, attended with the most disheartening circumstances, until the intelligence arrived that the Hessian army were made prisoners. On hearing this, a glow of health reddened my cheek, and I again volunteered for the service. But, after starting for the army, we were met with the cheering intelligence of the brilliant affair at Trenton, and my companions in arms returned home singing for joy. I, however, was destined

to remain long among strangers, sick, and nigh unto death.

From this time I considered my country safe, nor ever after sickened at the thought of wearing the chains of civil bondage. But, alas! I wore chains infinitely more galling than any ever forged by an earthly tyrant. My soul was in bondage to sin. Civil freedom I thought I understood, and gloried much in it. But the perfect law of liberty, promulgated by Jesus Christ the Son of the living God, I understood not. This law is indeed suited to the lapsed state of man. To all it affords grace to accept of its provisions—asks not *holiness* as a condition of pardon and mercy, but *faith*; and by *love* are its requisitions fulfilled. When the trembling jailer inquired of Paul and Silas what he must do to be saved—saved from the guilt he felt and the vengeance he feared—they replied, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” But alas! I knew this not. My views were confused, and I understood not the plan of salvation. I thought of man as under the law purely, which gives no strength to keep it, and requires perfect obedience, on pain of suffering its penalty. If some were elected, they could no more live by such a law than those who were passed by. But to these

the curses of the law were quite harmless; for although it called for vengeance on them, and thundered its anathemas against them, they were averted by a mighty arm, and fell with double force upon those devoted to eternal pain. Such were my confused views about religion. Now what could such a one as I do? My physical powers were prostrated by disease, and my mind bewildered by the religious opinions I had been taught in my childhood, without being able to understand them. It is true, I sometimes read; but superstitiously believing that God's effective will was hidden from man, I doubted much if what I read was true. For if God does not will that all should come to him, through Christ, and be saved, I inquired, what in fact does he will? If salvation be not conditional, may not some who live and die in sin escape at last? Can it be consistent with the divine veracity to say, that God secretly wills the death of most men, though he plainly declares he is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance?" 2 Peter iii, 9. As well may we suppose that he secretly designs that all shall live, though he has denounced eternal punishment against the finally impenitent. Such were my reasonings.

I had been led to infer, from the effect my reading of the Catechism and Confession of Faith had produced on my mind, that no human being was ever properly in a state of trial, not even Adam himself. I accordingly expressed to my mother my disbelief, for the reason I have named, in the doctrine set forth in those works. She seemed much concerned, and said, "Beware, my son, how you believe a doctrine false which is so clearly proved by Scripture. "I know," said I, "our minister told us last sabbath that God's decrees ever had in view his own glory and the salvation of the elect by Jesus Christ; and that this was true even in respect to the transgression and fall of our first parents; but tell me, my dear mother, whose glory and benefit had he in view when he decreed the damnation of millions of his unborn, and consequently unoffending creatures? Alas! how can I love a God whom I view as making man, willing him to sin, and then punishing him eternally for it?" Here I was silenced by my mother's tears. But I could not longer hold to this system. In leaving it, however, I did not find the right way. I resorted to nature's laws as my guide, preferring to believe that the Deity had revealed no will, rather than admit that he had revealed one so much at variance with

himself and the dictates of reason—that he had made no decree with respect to the future destiny of man, rather than entertain the opinion that he had made one in which he has sworn by himself he has no pleasure.

In this state of mind a wide door was open before me to launch forth into all the vices and follies of that dark and cloudy day. But two things, providentially, operated as a check upon me. My physical powers were paralyzed by protracted affliction; and my conscience, though greatly darkened, had yet some influence to restrain me from licentious freedom in a course of wickedness. But how easily is man blinded by the deceitfulness of sin? When reason, always proud, silences conscience by a too hasty decision against its dictates, what is man? A steed broken loose, bounding over hill and dale, gambolling in the wilderness and on the barren waste. Thus was it with me, fool that I was. But the horrifying profaneness of scoffing infidels, with whom I came in contact, so shocked my feelings that I sped my way back, or rather turned aside, and sought an asylum from my woes in gloomy solitude.

I was now, for several months, little better than a maniac. I delighted in nothing so much as in being alone. To wander in re-

tired places, and indulge in the reveries of my own mind, or among the works of God, with which I was surrounded; sometimes cherishing the delightful thought that I had an interest in the great Parent of all, and was an object of his pity, accorded most with my state of feeling. And, on such occasions, I was sometimes melted to tears. At other times I was led to adopt the language of the poet,—

“Ten thousand midnights roll'd their midnight gloom,  
In sullen pomp, along a starless sky!”

At times I devoted myself much to reading. Interesting histories I preferred to any other solid works; but novels took the lead, and I devoured all I could procure. With my jaundiced eyes I could find nothing in the Bible whereon to build, but a doubtful peradventure—a mere shadow—and with this I dare no more converse than with a spectre from the dismal shades. In such a state where or to whom could I go for instruction and relief?

There were indeed in the place a little praying, self-denying band of Christians. But they were held in derision by the laughing multitude, and denounced as fanatics by the graver sort. These could have told me what I so much desired to know, and led me to the Rock cleft for me and all mankind. But of



this I was ignorant ; and I fled to gloomy solitude, foster-mother of moping melancholy and sad despair. Look which way I would, all was darkness—darkness through which no ray of light could pass, except a sudden flash like vivid lightning, too quickly gone to show from whence it came.

I was urged on by the subtle foe to doubt of providence and of the immortality of the soul—at least of consciousness to those who sleep in death until the end of time ; and that sleep I sometimes much coveted. - But something gently whispered in my ear, “ Be on your guard—these melancholy thoughts may pave the way to suicide, and bring upon your name an indelible stain. Think how the tale of horror would petrify the heart of your dear mother, in whose fond maternal arms you were so lately caressed, and from whom you have so often received the affectionate charge to lead a virtuous life. If her peace weigh aught with you, beware !”

But it is not in solitude alone that the insidious foe works ill to man, although few escape who devote themselves to gloomy meditations upon the condition into which their conduct, or the errors of an appalling creed, have brought them. With almost as much reason might one expect to hail the dawn of day



who makes the hungry lion's den his retreat for the night, as to hope to escape uninjured by dwelling upon these things alone. But he who meditates my ruin cares not which way I take, the pleasurable or the forlorn, so it leads me to the ruin he meditates.

About this time I contracted an acquaintance with a young man of insinuating manners, who was completing the study of navigation. He was expecting to go to sea with a brother-in-law, who was an experienced commander, as his mate in a brig which was nearly fitted for the voyage. He had the address to induce me to engage in the same study with him, promising to give me all the aid he could until the brig was ready, and that I should have the steward's berth on board, when he would assist me in my studies until I had acquired a knowledge of the art. And he said he doubted not that we should make our fortunes. The brig was to carry a few long guns, have a picked crew, and outsail every thing on the seas. Such were the inducements held out to me to enlist in the enterprise. But I knew not the deep-laid scheme. The truth of the matter was, as it turned out, that the owners were their country's enemies; and the brig was designed to carry on a contraband trade with the British.

Between the owners and the enemy there was an understanding. The vessel, laden with provisions, was to be thrown in their way, and to be captured; and then a liberal price was to be paid for the cargo, and she permitted to escape. Some of the persons engaged in this adventure had held offices under the government, and were still deemed friends to their country. They had, besides, enticed some who had borne a conspicuous part in the service to favour their plot, not doubting of success; and, if they could not persuade those who were not in it that their capture was real and unavoidable, they hoped to quiet them with money.

Ignorant of all this design and treachery, I was drawn to the very verge of the abyss, and suspected it not. The brig was ready to sail, and the captain was in our village. I had been introduced to him, and the time was set for me to prepare, at a moment's warning, to embark and enter upon the duties of my office. Thus things stood, when a merciful Providence interposed, and prevented my name being enrolled upon the scroll of infamy. I was as a frail bark tossed upon a stormy and unknown sea. The sea had become calm, but I had neared a vortex, and had been well nigh swallowed up. But a kind

breeze sprung up at the moment of imminent danger, and I was wafted into a harbour of safety and delight.

Impatient for the hour to arrive when I was to enter upon an enterprise on which I was fully bent, I wandered to a neighbouring grove, not merely to indulge in reverie, but to think more minutely on the subject of our adventure than I had before done. While I was labouring to find arguments to justify the course I was about to pursue, a stranger passed me, though I was so merged in the thicket that he did not see me. As he was going by, he began to sing the following lines:—

“ Still out of the deepest abyss  
Of trouble I mournfully cry,  
And pine to recover my peace,  
And see my Redeemer and die.

I cannot, I cannot forbear  
These passionate longings for home;  
O! when shall my spirit be there?  
O! when will the messenger come?”

As he walked his horse slowly I heard every word distinctly, and was deeply touched, not only with the melody of his voice, which was among the best I ever heard, but with the words he uttered, and especially the couplet,—

“ I cannot, I cannot forbear  
These passionate longings for home.”

After he ceased, I went out and followed him a great distance, hoping he would begin again. He however stopped at the house of a Methodist, and dismounted. I then concluded he must be a Methodist preacher, and would probably preach that evening. I felt a wish to hear him ; but thought I could not in consequence of a previous engagement.

As yet I knew very little of the Methodists. My mother, who was strongly prejudiced against them, charged me to refrain from going after them ; and I had heard many things said against them, especially that they were disaffected against their country. There was one Methodist in town, however, to whom I was under some obligation. This good man had noticed me ; and, suspecting that I was under some religious impressions, he came and told me that Mr. Pedicord, a most excellent preacher, had come into the place, and would preach that night, and he very much wished me to hear him. I told him I presumed I had seen the preacher, and mentioned the lines I had heard him sing on the road. On inquiring of him if he knew such a hymn, he replied that he did very well, and immediately commenced and sung it to the same tune ; and, as he was an excellent singer, I was deeply affected, even to tears. I told

him I would be glad to hear Mr. Pedicord, and probably should hear a part of the sermon, and possibly the whole, if it were not too long. I accordingly went, and was there when the preacher commenced his service. I thought he sung and prayed delightfully. His text was taken from the 24th chapter of Luke: "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures. And he said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Soon was I convinced that all men were redeemed and might be saved—and saved *now*, from the guilt, practice, and love of sin. With this I was greatly affected, and could hardly refrain from exclaiming aloud, "This is the best intelligence I ever heard." When the meeting closed, I hastened to my lodgings, retired to my room, fell upon my knees before God, and spent much of the night in penitential tears. I did not once think of my engagement with my sea-bound companions until the next day, when I went and told the young man who had induced me to enlist into the project that I had abandoned all thoughts of going to sea. They,

however, proceeded in their perilous undertaking, were betrayed, their officers thrown into prison, and the brig and cargo confiscated. When I heard of this, I praised the Lord for my deliverance from this danger and infamy, which I considered worse than death.

I now gave up the study of navigation, and abandoned all company but that of the pious. The New Testament I read over and over, and was charmed with the character of God our Saviour, as revealed in it; and I esteemed reproach, for his sake, more desirable than all earthly treasure.

Mr. Pedicord returned again to our village. I hastened to see him, and tell him all that was in my heart. He shed tears over me, and prayed. I was dissolved in tears. He prayed again. My soul was filled with unutterable delight. He now rejoiced over me as a son—"an heir of God, and a joint heir with Christ." I felt and knew that I was made free. And, as I had been firm in my attachment to the cause of civil freedom, I did hope that I should be enabled to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made me free.

I was now brought to reflect upon the circumstance which had led to this change in me—this happy change, so sudden, so great, as



hardly left a vestige of my former self. By it all worldly maxims were reversed, and principles, quite new, of honour and of shame, were introduced as governing the whole man. It had been said that the Methodists, with Wesley at their head, were bringing shame upon the whole Christian world by preaching up free will, and causing men to err and even blaspheme against the doctrine of divine decrees; that they maintained that all were redeemed and might share alike in the blessings of the gospel-feast; and that one of these preachers, mighty in words, would, were it possible, deceive the very elect. Such remarks respecting them induced a desire and determination in me to hear them, though I doubted much whether this new sect were sustained by the sacred oracles. It was soon after I formed this determination that the excellent Pedicord came to our village, and I was providentially led, as before stated, to hear him.

Soon after I wrote to the good man, in a manner expressive of my feelings when I first heard him preach, as well as those which followed. In the ardour and simplicity of my soul, I said, "A thousand blessings on the man who brought me this intelligence. On my bended knees I owned the doctrine true,



and said, it was enough—I may be happy—heaven may be mine, since Jesus tasted death for all, and wills them to be saved! But I am not myself; my hopes and fears are new. O may I never lose this tenderness of heart. Yes, my friend, I am thy debtor. To me thou hast restored my Bible and my God. And shall I be ungrateful? No. I will see thee and confess the whole. Thy God and thy people shall be mine.”

Mount Holly,\* a pleasant village in the county of Burlington, New-Jersey, was the place of my spiritual birth; and, on that account, it has ever been to me the most lovely spot I ever saw, not even excepting Greenwich, the place of my nativity. I was here

\* Here, in the summer of '76, we halted on our way to Perth Amboy. We were all volunteers, and chiefly young. Walking one day thoughtfully in an unfrequented part of the town I came near to a neat little dwelling, rather tastefully surrounded with fruit trees. A lady, in the habit of a Quakeress, invited me in, remarking that she had something to say to me. So saying, she took me by the hand and led me into the house. When I was seated, she inquired with an affectionate look, “Hast thou a mother?” I replied that, when I left home, I had, and that there was such a resemblance between her and my mother, both in person and tone of voice, that I could not but be moved at seeing and hearing her speak. “Was thy mother consenting at thy becoming a soldier?” she inquired. I stated that she had many fears on my account; but, believing that many mothers must be called to part with their sons in the nation’s struggle for independence, she gave her consent, hoping that it might be the will of God to preserve me.” “Thy mother, then, is pious,”

in former years as a soldier, on my way to the army, and this was my retreat, when, in a state of melancholy bordering on despair, I sought concealment. Here, now, while the joyous villagers sought me in vain on the playful green, I passed the solemn twilight in audience with my God. Here, too, I had spent the livelong day in fasting and melting thoughts on Calvary, agitated with petrifying fears and gloomy horrors ; sometimes imagining sounds of ominous import, as though the mountain-tops had become the rendezvous of fiends or beasts of prey. But when the disquietude of my mind was allayed by the

she added. "Yes," I replied, "my mother is pious ; but she is a predestinarian in her views, and fondly hopes that it is the will of God that our country shall be free ; and, on that account, gave her consent the more readily." "Thee knows," said the kind-hearted woman, "the Friends do not hold to war ; and my heart is pained to see so many goodly young men called from home, and exposed to the dangers of the camp—many doubtless to be slaughtered or led away captive. It may be, as thy mother supposes, the will of our heavenly Father that we should be free. But, were it so, it might doubtless be effected without the shedding of blood. For thy sake, and for thy mother's sake, I hope the Lord will preserve thee ; and, if thou cast thy care upon him, in well-doing, he will preserve thee." Then, giving me some choice fruit, she charged me to abstain from the use of strong drink, saying, "It is a destroyer, and I fear it has destroyed my youngest son." "Now," added she, "if thou dost, from the fear of God, abstain from strong drink, I am sure he will preserve thee." And, from that hour, I have only used it medicinally. When I drew my rations, as a soldier, I poured it upon the ground.

peaceful enjoyment of the grace of life, I no longer sought concealment; and it was strange to see with what amazement many listened while I told them what the Lord had done for me. Some wept bitterly, confessed their ignorance of such a state, and pronounced me happy; while others thought me *mad*, and on the Methodists, not on me, laid all the blame of what they conceived to be my derangement.

The spirit and character of the work which was prevailing through the country at this time may be gathered from an account of a love feast, as furnished by me for the Christian Advocate and Journal, and published in that paper.

In the year of our Lord 1780, when we were contending for independence, not with Great Britain alone, but with her Indian and Hessian mercenaries, and what was worse, with many of our fellow-citizens who despised independence, or, in despair of obtaining it, had joined the enemy; when our country was laid waste by fire and sword, and many hundreds who had embarked in the cause of freedom were perishing in captivity, with hunger and cold; when many bosoms were agitated with the thoughts of revenge on our cruel and unnatural enemies, and resolved

with independence to live or die—it was at such a time as this, when little was known, or thought, or said about the way to heaven, a missionary of the Methodist order volunteered for East Jersey, and was instrumental in producing a religious excitement of a very interesting character. Many who seemed to have forgotten that they were accountable creatures, and lived in enmity one with another on account of the part they had taken in the great national quarrel, were brought to follow the advice of St Paul, “Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ’s sake, hath forgiven you.”

Of this I saw a pleasing exhibition in a love-feast, at a quarterly meeting held by our missionary, Mr. George Mair, previous to his taking leave of his spiritual children in the north-west part of East Jersey. I saw there those who had cordially hated lovingly embrace each other, and heard them praise the Lord who had made them one in Christ. The meeting was held in a barn, attended by several preachers, one of whom opened it on Saturday, and great power attended the word; many wept aloud, some for joy, and some for grief; many, filled with amazement, fled, and left room for the preachers to have access to the mourners to pray with and exhort them

to believe in the Lord Jesus, which many did, and rejoiced with great joy. Such a meeting I had never seen before.

Next morning we met early for love-feast. All that had obtained peace with God, and all who were seeking it, were invited, and the barn was nearly full. As few present had ever been in a love-feast, Mr. Mair explained to us its nature and design, namely, to take a little bread and water, not as a sacrament, but in token of our Christian love, in imitation of a primitive usage, and then humbly and briefly to declare the great things the Lord had done for them in having had mercy on them.

Mr. James Sterling, of Burlington, West Jersey, was the first who spoke, and the plain and simple narrative of his Christian experience was very affecting to many. After him rose one of the new converts, a Mr. Egbert, and said, "I was standing in my door, and saw a man at a distance, well mounted on horseback, and as he drew near I had thoughts of hailing him, to inquire the news; but he forestalled me by turning into my yard and saying to me, 'Pray, sir, can you tell me the way to heaven?' 'The way to heaven, sir! we all *hope* to get to heaven, and there are *many ways* that men take.' 'Ah! but,' said the stranger, 'I want to know the best way.'

‘Alight, sir, if you please; I should like to hear you talk about the way you deem the best. When I was a boy I used to hear my mother talk about the way to heaven, and I am under an impression you must know the way.’ He did alight, and I was soon convinced the judgment I had formed of the stranger was true. My doors were opened, and my neighbours invited to come and see and hear a man who could and would, I verily believed, tell us the best way to heaven. And it was not long before myself, my wife, and several of my family, together with many of my neighbours, were well assured we were in the way, for we had peace with God, with one another, and did ardently long and fervently pray for the peace and salvation of all men. ‘Tell me, friends,’ said he, ‘is not this the way to heaven?’

“It is true, many of us were for a time greatly alarmed and troubled. We communed together, and said, It is a doubtful case if God will have mercy on us, and forgive us our sins; and if he does, it must be after we have passed through long and deep repentance. But our missionary, to whom we jointly made known our unbelieving fears, said to us, ‘Cheer up, my friends, ye are not far from the kingdom of God. Can any of you be a



greater sinner than Saul of Tarsus? and how long did it take him to repent? Three days were all. The Philippian jailer, too, in the same hour in which he was convicted, was baptized, rejoicing in God, with all his house. Come,' said he, 'let us have faith in God, remembering the saying of Christ, *Ye believe in God, believe also in me.* Come, let us go down upon our knees and claim the merit of his death for the remission of sins, and he will do it—look to yourselves, each man, God is here.' Instantly one who was, I thought, the greatest sinner in the house except myself, fell to the floor as one dead, and we thought he was dead; but he was not literally dead, for there he sits with as significant a smile as any one present.'” Here the youth of whom he spoke uttered the word *glory*, with a look and tone of voice that ran through the audience like an electric shock, and for a time interrupted the speaker; but he soon resumed his narrative, by saying, “The preacher bid us not be alarmed—we must all *die to live.* Instantly I caught him in my arms and exclaimed, The guilt I *felt*, and the vengeance I *feared*, are gone, and now I know heaven is not far off; but here, and there, and wherever *Jesus* manifests himself, is *heaven.*” Here his powers of speech failed, and he sat

down and wept, and there was not, I think, one dry eye in the barn.

A German spoke next, and if I could tell what he said as told by him, it would be worth a place in any man's memory. But this I cannot do. He, however, spoke to the following import:—"When de preacher did come to mine house, and did say, 'Peace be on dis habitation; I am come, fader, to see if in dese troublesome times I can find any in your parts dat does know de way to dat country where war, sorrow, and crying is no more; and of whom could I inquire so properly as of one to whom God has given many days?' When he did say dis, I was angry, and did try to say to him, Go out of mine house; but I could not speak, but did tremble, and when mine anger was gone I did say, I does fear I does not know de way to dat goodist place, but mine wife does know; sit down, and I will call her. Just den mine wife did come in, and de stranger did say, 'Dis, fader, is, I presume, yourn wife, of whom you say she does know de way to a better country, de way to heaven. Dear woman, will you tell it me?' After mine wife did look at de stranger one minute, she did say, *I do know Jesus*, and is not he de way? De stranger did den fall on his knees and

tank God for bringing him to mine house, where dere was one dat did know de way to heaven ; he did den pray for me and mine children, dat we might be like mine wife, and all go to heaven togeder. Mine wife did den pray in Dutch, and some of mine children did fall on deir knees, and I did fall on mine, and when she did pray no more de preacher did pray again, and mine oldest daughter did cry so loud.

“From dat time I did seek de Lord, and did fear he would not hear me, for I had made de heart of mine wife so sorry when I did tell her she was mad. But de preacher did show me so many promises dat I did tell mine wife if she would forgive me, and fast and pray wid me all day and all night, I did hope de Lord would forgive me. Dis did please mine wife, but she did say, We must do all in de name of de Lord Jesus. About de middle of de night I did tell mine wife I should not live till morning, mine distress was too great. But she did say, Mine husband, God will not let you die ; and just as de day did break, mine heart did break, and tears did run so fast, and I did say, Mine wife, I does now believe mine God will bless me, and she did say, Amen, amen, come, Lord Jesus. Just den mine oldest daughter, who had been

praying all night, did come in and did fall on mine neck, and said, O mine fader, Jesus has blessed me. And den joy did come into mine heart, and we have gone on rejoicing in de Lord ever since. Great fear did fall on mine neighbours, and mine barn would not hold all de peoples dat does come to learn de way to heaven." His looks, his tears, and his broken English, kept the people in tears, mingled with smiles, and even laughter, not with lightness, but joy, for they believed every word he said.

After him, one got up and said, For months previous to the coming of Mr. Mairs into their place, he was one of the most wretched of men. He had heard of the Methodists, and the wonderful works done among them, and joined in ascribing it all to the devil. At length a fear fell on him; he thought he should die and be lost. He lost all relish for food, and sleep departed from him. His friends thought him mad; but his own conclusion was, that he was a reprobate, having been brought up a Calvinist; and he was tempted to shoot himself, that he might know the worst. He at length resolved he would hear the Methodists; and when he came, the barn was full; there was, however, room at the door, where he could see the preacher, and hear well. He

was soon convinced he was no reprobate, and felt a heart to beg of God to forgive him for ever harbouring a thought that he, the kind Parent of all, had reprobated any of his children. And listening, he at length understood the cause of his wretchedness; it was guilt, from which Jesus came to save us. The people all around him being in tears, and hearing one in the barn cry, Glory to Jesus, hardly knowing what he did, he drew his hat from under his arm, and swinging it over his head, began to huzza with might and main. The preacher saw him and knew he was not in sport, for the tears were flowing down his face, and smiling, said, "Young man, thou art not far from the kingdom of God; but rather say, Hallelujah, the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Several others spoke, and more would have spoken, had not a general cry arisen when the doors were thrown open that all might come in and see the way that God sometimes works.

## CHAPTER V.

Anecdote of Richard Ivy and two American officers—Mr. Ware's religious friends signify their belief of his call to preach—He doubts—Bishop Asbury sends for him and examines him respecting some things reported of him and his doctrinal views—Sends him to Dover circuit—He is kindly received on the circuit—Sees fruit of his labours—Preaches in a church where the vestrymen undertake to turn him out, but are defeated.

SOON after I joined the Methodist society, Messrs. Pedicord and Cromwell were removed from our circuit, and Dudley and Ivy appointed in their place.\* In one part of the circuit there were several families who had received the preachers from the beginning. Some of these were the most wealthy and respectable in the vicinity, only they were suspected of being unfriendly to the cause of their country. They had joined the Methodists before the war commenced; and though they had committed no act by which they could be justly accused of opposition to the declaration of independence, yet as they refused to bear arms they were considered hostile to it, and the preachers suspected of disaffection on account of continuing to preach at their houses.

\* It appears from the minutes that this change took place in 1780. The circuit was then called Delaware.—*Editor.*



Learning that a company of soldiers, quartered near one of these appointments, had resolved to arrest the first preacher who should come there, and carry him to head quarters, I determined to accompany him, hoping, as I was acquainted with some of the officers, to convince them that he was no enemy to his country. The preacher was Richard Ivy, who was at that time quite young. The rumour of what was about to be done having gone abroad, many of the most respectable inhabitants of the neighbourhood were collected at the place. Soon after the congregation were convened, a file of soldiers were marched into the yard and halted near the door; and two officers came in, drew their swords and crossed them on the table, and seated themselves, one at each side of it, but so as to look the preacher full in the face. I watched his eye with great anxiety, and soon saw that he was not influenced by fear. His text was, "*Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.*" When he came to enforce the exhortation, "Fear not," he paused, and said, "Christians sometimes fear when there is no cause of fear." And so, he added, he presumed it was with some then present. Those men who were engaged in the defence of their

country's rights meant them no harm. He spoke fluently and forcibly in commendation of the cause of freedom from foreign and domestic tyranny, looking at the same time first on the swords and then in the faces of the officers, as if he would say, This looks a little too much like domestic oppression; and in conclusion, bowing to each of the officers and opening his bosom, said, "Sirs, I would fain show you my heart; if it beats not high for legitimate liberty, may it for ever cease to beat!" This he said in such a tone of voice, and with such a look, as thrilled the whole audience, and gave him command of their feelings. The countenances of the officers at first wore a contemptuous frown; then a significant smile; and then they were completely unarmed, hung down their heads, and, before the conclusion of this masterly address, shook like the leaves of an aspen. Many of the people sobbed aloud, and others cried out, Amen! while the soldiers without (the doors and windows being open) swung their hats and shouted, Huzza for the Methodist parson! On leaving, the officers shook hands with the preacher, and wished him well; and afterward said, they would share their last shilling with him.

From the time I made a public profession

of religion, many of my brethren thought I was called to preach, and told me so. But I believed them not. The affectionate solicitude I felt for the salvation of sinners, which had prompted me to some bold acts that I had performed from a sense of duty, I did not construe as a call to the ministry, but as a collateral evidence of my adoption into the family of God. That a knowledge of the learned languages was essential to qualify a man to preach the gospel, as many seemed to think, I did not believe, for some of the best preachers I ever heard had it not; but they had other qualifications—a good natural understanding and discriminating powers, which fall not to the common lot of men, however pious and learned they may be. When my feelings were moved on the subject of religion and the salvation of souls, I could talk somewhat readily; and I sometimes had the eloquence of tears. My capacity and knowledge were, in my own estimation, too limited ever to think of being a preacher. I was a leader and an exhorter; and more than these I never expected to be.

Such were my views and feelings when Bishop Asbury came to New-Mills, about seven miles from Mount Holly, and sent for me to come and see him. I had not been intro-

duced to him, nor did he previously know me. On entering his room, he fixed his discriminating eye upon me, and seemed to be examining me from head to foot as I approached him. He reached me his hand, and said, "This, I suppose, is brother Ware, or, shall I say, Pedicord the younger." I replied, "My name is Ware, sir, and I claim some affinity to the Wesleyan family, and Mr. Pedicord as my spiritual father." "You then revere the father of the Methodists?" said he. "I do," I replied, "greatly; the first time I heard his name mentioned, it was said of him, by way of reproach, that he had brought shame upon the Christian world by preaching up free will. Free will, said I, and what would you have him preach? bound will? he might as well go with St. Patrick and preach to the fish, as preach to men without a will. From that time, I resolved to hear the Methodists, against whom I had been so much prejudiced."

"Sit down," said Mr. Asbury, "I have somewhat to say unto thee. Have all men since the fall been possessed of free will?" I replied, that I considered they had since the promise made to Adam, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. "Can man then turn himself and live?" said

he. "So thought Ezekiel," I replied, "when he said, Turn yourselves and live;" remarking, as I understood it, that he can receive the testimony which God has given of his Son; and thus, through grace, receive power to become a child of God. "Are all men accountable to God?" he still further inquired. I replied, "The almighty Jesus says, 'Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his works shall be.'" "On what do you found the doctrine of universal accountability?" he added. "On the doctrine of universal grace—'The grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men,'" &c., was my reply.

He then looked at me very sternly, and said, "What is this I hear of you? It is said you have disturbed the peaceful inhabitants of Holly, by rudely entering into a house where a large number of young people were assembled for innocent amusement, and when welcomed by the company and politely invited to be seated, you refused, and proceeded to address them in such a way that some became alarmed and withdrew, and the rest soon followed." To this I answered, "My zeal in this affair may have carried me too far. But I knew them to be generally my friends and well-wishers, and felt to do as the man



out of whom Christ cast a legion of devils was directed, namely, to go and show my friends how great things God had done for me. It is true, when I entered the room, some appeared delighted to see me, and heartily welcomed me ; but those who knew me best appeared sad. And when invited to take a glass and be seated, I told them I must be excused, for I had not come to spend the evening with them, but to invite them to spend it with me. ‘ You know me,’ I said, ‘ and how delighted I have often been in your company, and with the amusements in which you have met to indulge. But I cannot now go with you. My conscience will not permit me to do so. But as none of your consciences, I am persuaded, forbid your going with me, I have come to invite you to go with me and hear the excellent Mr. Pedicord preach his farewell sermon. Pardon me, my friends, I am constrained to tell you, the Lord has done great things for me through the instrumentality of this good man.’ The circle was not very large. Not a word of reply was made to what I said. Some were affected, and soon left after I withdrew. It is true some of the citizens were offended, and said it was too much that the Methodists should give tone to the town. ‘ Must the youth of Mount Holly,’



said they, 'ask leave of the Methodists if they would spend an evening together in innocent amusement?' Others said, 'The young man must have acted from a divine impulse, or he could not have done it, as he is naturally diffident and unassuming.' But I never knew that any one of the party was offended."

Bishop Asbury listened to this simple explanation of the matter attentively, but without relaxing the sternness of his look, or making any reply to it. He then branched off to another subject. "Was it not bold and adventurous," said he, "for so young a Methodist to fill, for a whole week, without license or consultation, the appointments of such a preacher as George Mair?" I replied that Mr. Mair was suddenly called from the circuit by sickness in his family, and I saw that he was deeply afflicted, not only on account of the distress his family were suffering, but, especially, because of the disappointments it must occasion on a part of the circuit where there was a good work going on; that some of these appointments were new, and there was no one to hold any meeting with the people whatever; that I was therefore induced, soon after he was gone, to resolve on going to some of these places and telling those who might come out the cause of the preacher's absence; and

that if I was sometimes constrained to exhort these people, without a formal license, it was with fear and trembling, and generally very short, unless when the tears of the people caused me to forget that I was on unauthorized ground.

He still said nothing, either by way of reproof or commendation, more than the manner of his introducing the subjects might seem to imply. And being under an impression that his remarks were designed to mortify me for my course in the matter of the ball, and in taking the circuit in the absence of Mr. Mair, I said, "Mr. Asbury, if the person who informed you against me had told me of my errors, I would have acknowledged them." Here he stopped me, by clasping me in his arms, and saying in an affectionate tone, "You are altogether mistaken, my son—it was your friend Pedicord who told me of your pious deeds, and advised that you should be sent to Dover circuit, saying that he would be responsible that no harm, but good, would result from it." He then told me that I must go down to the peninsula, and take the Dover circuit, which had but one preacher on it; that I could tell the people, if I pleased, that I did not come in the capacity of a preacher, but only to assist in keeping up the appointments until

another could be sent ; and that he would give me a testimonial to introduce me. But if they did not cordially receive me, he said, I might return, and he would see me and compensate me for my time and expenses.

Here I was caught, and how could I decline ? If, when my zeal prompted me to take a circuit in the absence of a preacher for one week, I had found favour in the sight of the people, so as to occasion my being recommended to Mr. Asbury in this way, how could I refuse when he requested me to go and assist in keeping up the appointments on a circuit which needed aid, being now regularly licensed to exhort, until a preacher could be sent to it ? So I told him, if he insisted on it, I would go and do the best I could ; but I feared I should do more harm than good, and be unhappy in consequence of not being in my place.

Having pledged myself not to delay, early in September, 1783, I set my face toward the peninsula, with a heavy heart. Some of my old companions in sin were under religious impressions, and were very much afflicted at the thought of my leaving them. In Mount Holly I thought I might do some good ; but at Dover it seemed doubtful. Yet my pledge was given, and must be fulfilled.

I was kindly received by the people on

Dover circuit, and soon saw that that was the place for me. I was made to forget that I was among strangers. The simplicity, urbanity, and fervent piety, of the Methodists, on Dover circuit, were such that, after visiting a society once, it seemed long before I was to return to it again. Some of the members were wealthy and in the higher circles of life ; but they were not ashamed to bear the cross. Among these there were some, particularly a number of females, distinguished for piety and zeal, such as I had never before witnessed. The lady of Counsellor Bassett, and her two sisters, Mrs. Jones and Ward, possessed an uncommon degree of the true missionary spirit, and greatly aided the young preachers, by whom, principally, the Lord was carrying on his work on that favoured shore. To these might be added others, and especially the wife of Judge White, who was a mother in Israel in very deed.

There was, at almost every appointment, a goodly number of young people, who were seeking the Lord. To these I could preach a Saviour whom I knew ; and some, at almost every meeting, were brought into glorious liberty, which had a great effect on others. I had the happiness of receiving many of these young people into society. In class-

meetings, too, I felt much at home ; and frequently our rejoicing in the Lord was great.

In my public exercises I was sometimes greatly embarrassed, when tears came to my relief, which was often the case ; and there are few who can resist the eloquence of tears. In the meantime I prayed, read, and wrote much. My Bible was my chief book. From this, with such helps as were within my reach, I endeavoured to ascertain the great outlines of the “doctrinal map, exhibiting the boundaries of truth, the crooked shores of the sea of error, the haven of peace, and the dangerous rocks on which unwary theologians have been wrecked.”

I began my public labours by quoting a passage which had been studied with much prayer, and which I thought I understood, and by making some practical remarks upon it. After having been often blessed in attempting to preach, I ventured formally to take a text ; but not until advised by some whom I considered competent judges that my gift was rather to preach than to exhort.

While on Dover circuit we were invited to preach in the Protestant Episcopal Church at Duck Creek. Here I met with an occurrence which, for the moment, gave me some alarm ; but it was soon over, and with it the fear and



confusion of the large congregation in whose presence it happened. I had gone through with a part of the morning service, and was still in the desk, where I gave out my text; but, before I had finished my introductory remarks, three men came marching into the church in Indian file, and halted just before the desk. The foremost one announced himself as a vestryman, and ordered me out of the desk and the church, or, he said, he would compel me to go out. Finding I did not comply, he seized me by the collar and dragged me from the desk. On seeing this, a giant of a man, near by, seized him in like manner, and, raising his huge fist, told him if he did not let me go he would knock him down. Here Judge Raymond called out and said, "Don't strike him, Mr. Skillington; and if he does not let the preacher go, and cease to disturb the congregation, I will commit him." He, however, had let go his hold of me when threatened by Mr. S.; and with his few companions retired. So we got rid of our zealous Churchman.



## CHAPTER VI.

Mr. Ware attends conference, for the first time, in 1784, in Baltimore—Observations upon the preachers—Is impressed that he ought to go home ; but yields to the advice of his friends and spiritual advisers to remain in the work—Is appointed to Kent circuit, eastern shore of Maryland—Anecdote of a clergyman seeking a settlement—Thoughts on the pretensions of the advocates of exclusive prelacy.

IN the spring of 1784, the conference sat at Baltimore, which was the first I attended. There was quite a number of preachers present. Although there were but few on whose heads time had begun to snow, yet several of them appeared to be way-worn and weather-beaten into premature old age. The whole number of itinerant preachers in America, at that time, was eighty-three ;—stations and circuits, sixty-four ; and members in society, fourteen thousand nine hundred and eighty-eight. I doubt whether there ever has been a conference among us, in which an equal number could be found, in proportion to the whole, so dead to the world, and so gifted and enterprising, as were present at the conference of 1784. They had much to suffer at that early period of our history, and especially during the revolutionary struggle.

Among these pioneers, Asbury, by common

consent, stood first and chief. There was something in his person, his eye, his mien, and in the music of his voice, which interested all who saw and heard him. He possessed much natural wit, and was capable of the severest satire ; but grace and good sense so far predominated that he never descended to any thing beneath the dignity of a man and a Christian minister. In prayer he excelled. Had he been equally eloquent in preaching, he would have excited universal admiration as a pulpit orator. But, when he was heard for the first time, the power and unction with which he prayed, would naturally so raise the expectation of his auditors, that they were liable to be disappointed with his preaching ; for, although he always preached well, in his sermons he seldom, if ever, reached that high and comprehensive flow of thought and expression—that expansive and appropriate diction—which always characterized his prayers. This may be accounted for, in part, at least, from the fact stated by the late Rev. Freeborn Garrettson in preaching his funeral sermon. “He prayed,” said the venerable Garrettson, “the best, and he prayed the most of any man I ever knew. His long-continued rides prevented his preaching as often as some others ; but he could find

a throne of grace, if not a congregation, upon the road.”

Next to him, in the estimation of many, stood the placid Tunnell, the philosophical Gill, and the pathetic Pedicord. It would be difficult to determine to which of these primitive missionaries, as men of eminent talents and usefulness, the preference should be given. Tunnell and Gill were both defective in physical strength. Pedicord was a man of much refined sensibility. They were all the children of nature, not of art ; but especially Tunnell and Pedicord. A sailor was one day passing where Tunnell was preaching. He stopped to listen, and was observed to be much affected ; and, on meeting with his companions after he left, he said, “I have been listening to a man who has been dead, and in heaven ; but he has returned, and is telling the people all about that world.” And he declared to them he had never been so much affected by any thing he had ever seen or heard before. True it was, that Tunnell’s appearance very much resembled that of a dead man ; and, when, with his strong musical voice, he poured forth a flood of heavenly eloquence, as he frequently did, he appeared, indeed, as a messenger from the invisible world.

Gill was eagle-eyed, and, by those whose powers of vision were strong like his, he was deemed one of a thousand ; but, by the less penetrating, his talents could not be fully appreciated, as he often soared beyond them. On this account, Gill was not a favourite preacher of mine. But, in conversation, which afforded an opportunity for asking questions and receiving explanations on deep and interesting subjects, I have seldom known his equal. Jonathan and David were not more tenderly attached to each other than were Tunnell and Gill.

Pedicord was a man of a fine manly form, and his countenance indicated intelligence and much tender sensibility. His voice was soft and remarkably plaintive ; and he possessed the rare talent to touch and move his audience at once. I have seen the tear start, and the head fall, before he had uttered three sentences, which were generally sententious. Nor did he raise expectations to disappoint them. Like Tunnell, he arose as he advanced in his subject ; and if he could not, with him, bind his audience with chains, he could draw them after him with a silken cord. Never was a man more tenderly beloved in our part of the country than he ; and if the decision of their relative claims devolved on me, I should say there

was none like Pedicord. But he was my spiritual father.

Besides these, I might mention perhaps twenty others of nearly equal standing; and a number of them, perhaps, the superiors of those I have mentioned, in some respects. It is a pity that so few of this class of primitive American Methodist preachers have left any written memorial of themselves and their early labours.

I went to this conference under an impression that I ought to go home and endeavour to obtain an increase of knowledge and grace before I entered wholly into the work; but when I saw so many of the preachers broken down, and so great a call for labourers, I yielded to the advice of my spiritual father, and consented to take an appointment. I was appointed with James O. Cromwell and William Lynch, on the Kent circuit, Eastern Shore of Maryland.

Here, as on Dover circuit, I found a great number of young people, some of them connected with the first families; and I witnessed the pleasure of seeing many of them leading lives of piety and adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. Being young myself, it pleased the Lord to render me useful to this class, of whom I admitted more into

society than both of my elder brethren. When, in 1800, I had charge of the whole peninsula, I found many journeying toward the holy land, who, in sixteen years, had advanced from babes in Christ to fathers and mothers in Israel.

In September of this year, (1784,) I was at the house of a member of the Protestant Episcopal Church, whose wife was a Methodist. In conversation with him he remarked that he had some hope of seeing the old church resuscitated. "The people," said he, "are gathering about our long-forsaken church; a clergyman direct from England is to preach a trial sermon, and will probably be settled among us; come, will you go and hear him? he is said to be very learned." I told him I had come to spend the day with him, and should be pleased to go and hear the stranger. I accordingly went, and, for the first time, heard the divine, exclusive, and unchangeable right of prelacy preached up, but not, as I thought, very skilfully. The parable of the good Samaritan was the theme of the discourse. The preacher made the man who fell among the thieves to mean Adam; the good Samaritan, Christ; the inn, the church into which bleeding humanity was brought to be bound up and healed; and the two pence



given to the host, the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper.

“But who,” said the preacher, “is the host—the keeper of the inn, to whom the two pence were given? This is the main thing to which our attention is called.” Here, he added, he hesitated not to say, fearless of successful contradiction, that the apostles were the prelates of the primitive church; and that diocesan bishops were their successors; that to them appertained the exclusive right of ordination, confirmation, and government; and that this order was unchangeable, having, for its author and foundation, Christ and his apostles. “These things,” said he, “being unquestionably true, having the seal of the church whose infallibility is attested by Christ where he says, ‘The gates of hell shall not prevail against it,’ it follows, of course, that fallen humanity has never been by Heaven intrusted to any claiming to be clergymen, who cannot trace their ministerial succession from the apostles.”

These assumptions he endeavoured to support by quoting some authorities, and pouring out a flood of invective upon enthusiasm. “It was,” he said, “under the magic influence of enthusiasm that some men of distinction in the Church had given up diocesan episcopacy as

apostolic ;” and he admitted that the infatuation had at times become *general*, though not *universal* ; “for had it been so,” said he, “the gates of hell would have prevailed, the declaration of Christ to the contrary notwithstanding. John Wesley,” he continued, “was the prince of enthusiasts. He, with his babblers, as Rowland Hill calls them, has filled England with enthusiasts. And mark ! no stream can rise higher than its source ; consequently the preaching of the Methodists can only kindle an enthusiastic flame—a mere ignis fatuus—in any one.” As he thus expressed himself, a very interesting, pious female cried out, “Glory to God ! if what I now feel be enthusiasm, let me always be an enthusiast !”

This was a quietus, and threw the clergyman into serious embarrassment, as it was too evident not to be perceived by all that this rebuke from a lady highly esteemed for her accomplishments and piety, was approved by the congregation generally as justly merited. But he had gone too far to retreat, or even to make an apology ; and if he had been disposed to do the one or the other, there was still a serious difficulty—it was not *written*. So he hesitated before entering upon his third head, which was to note the literal meaning of the two pence mentioned in the text. But

he ventured to proceed, and said, this, in his opinion, referred to the support of the clergy, which he did think was more in accordance with the order of God in England than in America. At this allusion his audience evidently manifested much dissatisfaction. They were not in a state of mind, at that juncture, to bear such comparisons between the institutions of the two countries. The union of church and state, which was evidently implied in the allusion, had no advocates in this country, except among the disaffected—and especially not here, as the people were imbued with the principles of the revolution. He could, therefore, hardly have uttered any thing more offensive to their feelings.

After the sermon was over, a conference was held with the preacher, which soon terminated. Of what transpired I was informed by one of the officers of the church, with whom I was acquainted. In narrating the facts, he said, "Having been a vestry-man, it fell on me to open the business. This I did by informing his reverence that I feared we should not be able to give him a very liberal call; that the Methodists were numerous, and the preachers generally acceptable, so that if they had been in orders there would hardly have been a serious Churchman left. He was

then requested to name the sum we must pay in order to secure his services, which he did. He was informed, however, that so large an amount could not be raised ; but as he was single, and his perquisites would be considerable, and as he had said we were perishing for lack of knowledge, we expressed a hope that he would think of the case, and lay on us as light a burden as possible."

The gentleman then stated that fifty dollars a year was all he was willing to pay for the support of the gospel, twenty-five to the Methodists, and twenty-five to the Church ; and added, addressing himself to the minister, "But for one, sir, I must tell you my mind freely. I do not much admire your preaching, nor your spirit. My wife is a Methodist, and she is no more an enthusiast than your reverence. Such preaching, sir, will drive the people from the Church." At this, the preacher appeared agitated, and remarked, "I did say many Churchmen in America, I feared, were perishing for lack of knowledge ; and here we have an evidence of the truth of it. Here is a vestry-man who places Methodist preachers, the propagators of enthusiasm, on an equality with the divinely authorized clergy of the Church of England. From him I will receive nothing." "Pray, sir," said

another gentleman, interrupting him, "we cannot divorce our wives and turn our daughters out of doors, because they have joined the Methodists. There are but two clergymen on this whole peninsula, and one of these is a drunkard. I have been a Church warden in another state, and have often said I would never leave the Church; but I had much rather hear a Methodist preach than a drunken Churchman." "Pardon me, sir," said the parson, "do you think I am a drunkard? I perceive you mean to insult me. But we will make the matter short. I have told you for what I would serve you; and I now say plainly, that you may perish for all me, before I will serve you for any thing less." On hearing this, they all silently retired, leaving the priest intoxicated with passion, as some thought, if nothing else.

This was a singular and extremely imprudent course. Such abuse of the Methodists, would, I was quite sure, be very unlikely to pave his way for a settlement in that place; for at that early period of their history they numbered among them some of the most respectable citizens in Kent and Queen Anne's counties.

The exclusive rights of prelacy I did not believe, but could not deny but that I was



uninformed on the subject. They were not the Methodists only, however, who were, in the estimation of this clergyman, acting without a divine commission, but all others also who claimed to be ministers without Episcopal ordination. The first thing that struck me, on having my attention called to this subject, was, that without a commission from God it would be unreasonable to suppose that any man, especially the unlearned, could by preaching be instrumental in reforming sinners. But there were many, very many, on this favoured shore, who had been awakened and converted to God through the instrumentality of the Methodist preachers, and especially that of Joseph Cromwell, who, though he could not write his name, preached in the demonstration of the Spirit and with an authority that few could withstand. By his labours, thousands, of all classes and conditions in society, had been brought into the fold, and were walking worthy of their profession. And yet, a matter of which I could not help thinking, no Episcopal hands had been laid on his head. In a word, the Methodist preachers, who were generally young, and knew but little of these abstruse questions, or of theology generally, except what they learned from their Bibles, had been instrumental in waking



up a religious concern throughout this whole peninsula ; and as the fruits of their labours, many had become praying, self-denying, happy Christians.

A second thought that occurred to my mind was, if the Episcopal clergy were really the only divinely authorized heralds of the gospel, then doubtless would God put his seal upon them, and they would be known to all men as his accredited messengers, clothed with his panoply.

But I most marvelled that it should be presumed that the American people would tamely submit to have their right of private judgment in matters of religious faith and practice so peremptorily denied on the ground of the papistical infallibility of the Church. The church visible, the preacher said, was one and indivisible, and indefectible as to faith and order ; and added, " Who is he that will venture to say, that in the visible church man has not always had ample security against ignorance and error in religion ? " Alas ! thought I, what would have been the fate of the world, if the Jewish church had been consulted on the Messiahship of Christ, in the days of his advent ? And what better guarantee had men in the days of Luther from the Latin Church ?

While my mind was exercised on this sub-

ject, to which it had been directed by the circumstances already named, I was called, according to the custom of the place, to preach a funeral sermon. The deceased was a person of large possessions, and extensive family connections, some of whom were Methodists. These wished me to preach; but others expressed a preference for Dr. S., the Episcopal clergyman. My wish was, that he should preach, for I knew not how to preach the funeral sermon of a man who was allowed to be one of the most wicked men in that part of the country. He was a pilot; and in a gust of passion, while boisterously pouring forth a volley of curses against the sailors for not managing the ship to his mind, he fell upon the deck in an apoplectic fit, and spoke no more. Understanding that the doctor would be there, and knowing that he would preach if he had the opportunity, I delayed, that he might commence. This he did; and I arrived just in time to hear his text, which was, singular as it might seem for the occasion, "*I have kept the faith.*" But it answered his purpose. With the general character and habits of the man the doctor was perfectly familiar, having often been his guest, and, in fact, his bowl companion. But it was his faith, rather than his practice, which he was

about to commend; and from what he said it would seem that he considered the terms *Churchman* and *Christian* to be synonymous, and that nothing could make a man, who had been baptized by a duly authorized clergyman a son of perdition, but apostacy from the Church. At least the manner in which he improved the occasion was calculated so to impress the minds of his hearers.

He acknowledged that his parishioner had been a man of pleasure; that he had been employed in a sea-faring life; and, sailor-like, was addicted to the use of expletives, and excess of wine. "But he had many fine traits of character. He had been true to his country; was complete master of his calling, and always faithful to his employers; and, what was best of all, he was sound in his religious theory, and might be said, in the language of the text, to have 'kept the faith.' Nothing," said he, "could induce him to forsake the Church into whose bosom he had been received by baptism, while many of his connections who outshone him in morals have shown themselves less tenacious of the faith once delivered to the church than he. The doctrines, the liturgy, and the apostolic government, he held fast without wavering; and if in practical piety he came short, yet who will venture to

say he is not at rest, if in his last moments he lifted a penitent, suppliant eye to Heaven!" The doctor, who well knew how he stood in the public estimation, and sometimes lamented his too great weakness in the use of wine, by a rather delicate reference to himself, entreated his hearers not to do as he sometimes did, but as he always said. This was an illustration of the principles of the creed and moral code which had been to me matter of much reflection, that tended greatly to settle my mind respecting them. It did appear that, in his view, there was no hell for orthodox diocesan Episcopalians, whatever else they might be.

Nor was I alone in this. Conversing not long after with an intelligent Churchman respecting the doctor's sermon, he said, "If he did not send the pilot to heaven by the way of purgatory, it was because he was not entirely sound in the faith—he is papistical, though not a papist outright; he is what we call a high Churchman, and is in the habit, especially when a little excited with wine, of preaching all Churchmen to heaven, and of denying the right to any man to preach, baptize, or bury the dead, who has not a regular Episcopal ordination. But there are few Churchmen in this country, or even in England, who

hold principles so nearly allied to popish infallibility." This gentleman was an Englishman, in orders, but had no parish; and he seemed to think himself scandalized by the sermon. He knew Mr. Wesley well, and had once heartily despised him, not as a fanatic, but as the most ambitious man, in his opinion, on the earth. But his views respecting him had been changed, and he said he then esteemed him as one of the greatest and best men in England; that he had preached, written, and lived down all the violent opposition which had been raised against him; and that he now had more of the confidence, love, and admiration of the people in England than any other man. He made some other remarks expressive of his disapprobation of the high Church notions which the doctor had shown so much zeal to vindicate, and he said the claim of succession was generally acknowledged to be a fiction.

This conversation, in connection with what had previously transpired, made a deep and lasting impression on my mind. While reflecting on the subject, I opened my Bible on the following passage: "And Jesus came, and spoke unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and earth," Matt. xxviii, 18. These words were spoken to the disciples on

their receiving the commission of their Master to go and evangelize the world. On reading them, I said to myself, "How explicit—how sublime are these terms! The reading of them inspires me with veneration and awe. Certainly here, if anywhere, are we to look for the exclusive rights of prelacy. But are they here? No;—nor have the apostles informed us that any such rights as are thus arrogated were taught among the private instructions they received from their Master." To me, then, it appeared evident, that if diocesan episcopacy be not a fable, it can be nothing more than a human institution. Moreover, if bishops and presbyters be not the same order, I could not conceive how the terms could be convertibly used by the apostles, as all who read the New Testament know they are. Here all my agitation and solicitude on the subject of succession subsided.



## CHAPTER VII.

Dr. Coke arrives in America—Meets Mr. Asbury at Judge Barrett's, in Delaware—A conference called to meet in Baltimore on Christmas, hence denominated the Christmas conference—Organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church—Beneficial effects of church privileges on the societies—Remarks on Dr. Coke and his views of his brethren in America, particularly Mr. Asbury—Reflections on the state of the societies before their organization into a church—Mr. Asbury's influence in preserving peace among them—Views entertained by the Christmas conference on the subject of education—Abingdon college.

THE Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States was organized in 1784, soon after the close of the revolution. It was not practicable during the war for Mr. Wesley, the father and founder of the Methodist societies, to furnish an organization suited to our necessities. But after its termination, Mr. Asbury, who lived in the feelings and possessed the entire confidence of both preachers and people, according to their general wish and expectation, made application to Mr. Wesley in behalf of the American societies, and he resolved without delay to send over Dr. Coke, whom he first set apart by the imposition of hands to the office of superintendent, with instructions to carry his plan into effect. He furnished the doctor with

forms of ordination for deacons, elders, and superintendents; and appointed him, jointly with Mr. Asbury, to preside over the Methodist family in America.

When Dr. Coke arrived in America he first saw Mr. Asbury at Judge Barrett's, (Barrett's Chapel,) in the state of Delaware, and exhibited to him his credentials. Mr. Asbury rejoiced for the consolation of being able to hope that relief would be afforded to the societies, but said, "Doctor, we will call the preachers together, and their voice shall be to me the voice of God." It was accordingly agreed to have a conference, to meet in Baltimore, on the ensuing Christmas.

Nearly fifty years have now elapsed since the Christmas conference; and I have a thousand times looked back to the memorable era with pleasurable emotions. I have often said it was the most solemn convocation I ever saw. I might have said, for many reasons, it was sublime. During the whole time of our being together in the transaction of business of the utmost magnitude, there was not, I verily believe, on the conference floor or in private, an unkind word spoken, or an unbrotherly emotion felt. Christian love predominated; and, under its influence, we "kindly thought and sweetly spoke the same."

The annual meetings of the preachers, sent, as they hold themselves to be, to declare in the name of the Almighty Jesus terms of peace between the offended Majesty of heaven and guilty man, were to them occurrences of interesting import. The privilege of seeing each other, after labouring and suffering reproach in distant portions of the Lord's vineyard, and of hearing the glad tidings which they expected to hear on such occasions of what God was doing through their instrumentality, encouraged their hearts every step they took in their long and wearisome journeys, and served as a cordial to their spirits. But never before had they met on so important and solemn an occasion as this. Fifteen years had passed away since Boardman and Pillmoor arrived in America, in the character of itinerants, under the direction of Mr. Wesley. This was the fifteenth conference. During all that time, those of us who would dedicate our infant offspring to the Lord by baptism, or would ourselves receive the holy sacrament, must go for these sacred rites to such as knew us not, and were entirely mistaken respecting our character. The charge preferred against us was not hypocrisy, but enthusiasm. Our opposers did not blame us for not living up to our profession outwardly, but for professing

too much—more than is the privilege of man in this life, in speaking with Christian confidence of the knowledge of a present salvation by the forgiveness of sins and the witness of the Spirit. There were, indeed, a few who harmonized with us in sentiment and in feeling. But, in the general estimation, we were the veriest enthusiasts the world ever saw.

Humiliating indeed was our condition. Not a man in holy orders among us; and against us formidable combinations were formed, not so much at first among the laity as among the clergy. But being denounced from the pulpit as illiterate, unsound in our principles, and enthusiastic in our spirit and practice—in a word, every way incompetent, and only to be despised—the multitude, men and women, were imboldened to attack us; and it was often matter of diversion to witness how much they appeared to feel their own superiority.

All these things, however, we could have borne without concern, as the work of God was prospering, and the societies increasing more rapidly than any other denomination in the country; but the want of orders had a tendency to paralyze our efforts. Many, very many, who had been brought to the knowledge of God through our instrumentality were kept from uniting with us because we

could not administer to them all the ordinances.

At the Christmas conference we met to congratulate each other, and to praise the Lord that he had disposed the mind of our excellent Wesley to renounce the fable of uninterrupted succession, and prepare the way for furnishing us with the long-desired privileges we were thenceforward expecting to enjoy. The announcement of the plan devised by him for our organization as a church filled us with solemn delight. It answered to what we did suppose, during our labours and privations, we had reason to expect our God would do for us; for in the integrity of our hearts we verily believed his design in raising up the preachers called Methodists, in this country, was to reform the continent, and spread scriptural holiness through these lands; and we accordingly looked to be endued, in due time, with all the panoply of God. We, therefore, according to the best of our knowledge, received and followed the advice of Mr. Wesley, as stated in our form of Discipline.

After Mr. Wesley's letter, declaring his appointment of Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury joint superintendents over the Methodists in America, had been read, analyzed, and cordially



approved by the conference, the question arose, "What name or title shall we take?" I thought to myself, I shall be satisfied that we be denominated, The Methodist Church, and so whispered to a brother sitting near me. But one proposed, I think it was John Dickens, that we should adopt the title of METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH. Mr. Dickens was, in the estimation of his brethren, a man of sound sense and sterling piety; and there were few men on the conference floor heard with greater deference than he. Most of the preachers had been brought up in what was called, "The Church of England;" and, all agreeing that the plan of general superintendence, which had been adopted, was a species of episcopacy, the motion on Mr. Dickens' suggestion was carried without, I think, a dissenting voice. There was not, to my recollection, the least agitation on the question. Had the conference indulged a suspicion that the name they adopted would be, in the least degree, offensive to the views or feelings of Mr. Wesley, they would have abandoned it at once; for the name of Mr. Wesley was inexpressibly dear to the Christmas conference, and especially to Mr. Asbury and Dr. Coke.

After our organization, we proceeded to elect a sufficient number of elders to visit the



quarterly meetings, and administer the ordinances ; and this it was which gave rise to the office of presiding elders among us.

From what I have said, it will be understood that, when the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized, I was present. But, as I was little more than a spectator of the interesting transactions of the Christmas conference, I shall take the liberty to speak of the character of the preachers who constituted that body, as if not numbered among them.

In practical wisdom they appeared to me to excel ; and, although few of them affected the scholar, yet they prized learning as a desirable accomplishment. Some of them were acquainted with the learned languages ; and most of them were not deficient in general and polite literature. But what eminently distinguished them as a body of Christian ministers was, that they possessed, in a high degree, the happy art of winning souls. In preaching and in debate they were workmen who needed not to be ashamed ; and they made wise and useful improvement of the knowledge they possessed, and the talents God had given them. Hence the high estimation in which they held the Bible. Many of them were in the habit of reading it regu-

larly on their knees ; and some made it a point to read it once through every year in that attitude. We may, therefore, venture to say, that few men, in any age of the church, knew better how to estimate the sum of good which Heaven kindly wills to man, and few have been so successful in recommending the Bible and Bible religion to their fellow-men.

Dr. Coke, on his way to the Christmas conference, passed through our circuit. I met him at Colonel Hopper's, in Queen Anne's county, on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. At first, I was not at all pleased with his appearance. His stature, complexion, and voice, resembled those of a woman rather than those of a man ; and his manners were too courtly for me. So unlike was he to the grave, and, as I conceived, apostolic Mr. Asbury, that his appearance did not prepossess me favourably. He had several appointments in the circuit, to which I conducted him ; and, before we parted, I saw so many things to admire in him that I no longer marvelled at his being selected by Mr. Wesley to serve us in the capacity of a superintendent. In public, he was generally admired ; and, in private, he was very communicative and edifying.

At one time, in a large circle, he expressed

himself in substance as follows:—"I am charmed by the spirit of my American brethren. Their love to Mr. Wesley is not surpassed by that of their brethren in Europe. It is founded on the excellence—the *divinity*—of the religion which he has been the instrument of reviving, and which has shed its benign influence on this land of freedom. I see in both preachers and people a resolution to venture on any bold act of duty, when called to practise piety before the ungodly, and to refuse compliance with fashionable vice. I see," continued he, with a countenance glowing with delight, "a great and effectual door opened for the promulgation of Methodism in America, whose institutions I greatly admire, and whose prosperity I no less wish than I do that of the land which gave me birth. In the presence of brother Asbury I feel myself a child. He is, in my estimation, the most apostolic man I ever saw, except Mr. Wesley."

These remarks of Dr. Coke made an impression on my mind not soon to be forgotten. He was the best speaker in a private circle or on the conference floor I ever heard. But his voice was too weak to command with ease a very large audience. Yet this he could sometimes do; and, when he succeeded in it,

his preaching was very impressive. Some of the first scholars in the country have been heard to say, that Dr. Coke spoke the purest English of any man they ever heard. His fine classical taste did not raise him, in his own estimation, above the weakest of his brethren. To them he paid the kindest attentions; and the most diffident and retiring among them, after being a short time in his company, were not only perfectly at ease, but happy at finding themselves associated with a brother who had learned to esteem others better than himself.

In reflecting upon the condition of the Methodist societies in America before the Christmas conference, I can only wonder at the privations to which they submitted for so long a time, out of reverence for Mr. Wesley. He had said he would never forsake the Church in which he was brought up; and the Methodists felt for him a tie of affection stronger than the ties of blood. Hence they continued to suffer on, hoping for relief when the war should terminate.

The struggle, however, continued so long that there is reason to believe, if it had not been for the influence of Mr. Asbury, the societies in America would have assumed the character of an independent church, and had

the ordinances of God duly administered to them. To men of thought it seemed unreasonable and unchristianlike that preachers who had grown gray in preaching the word, and succeeded in gathering a numerous people to the Lord, should refrain from administering to them the ordinances. Nor was the influence of Mr. Asbury, great as it was, sufficient to restrain the societies and keep them in that condition much longer. This I learned the first conference I attended.

I would not insinuate that, in this serious business, Mr. Asbury exerted any undue influence, or misapplied his talents. It was best, probably, that the Methodists in this country should remain as they were, until Mr. Wesley felt himself at liberty to exercise the right, which he unquestionably had, to ordain preachers for them. Neither Mr. Asbury, nor any of his coadjutors, believed in the divine, exclusive rights of prelacy, any more than they believed in transubstantiation; but they did believe that a divine interposition was manifest in the rise and spread of Methodism, and that Mr. Wesley was an extraordinary man, who was the chief instrument in the hand of God in this work. They therefore looked up to him with deference and respect, and cherished a fond hope that,



by his counsel and instruction, means would be devised to invest them with all the privileges of a church, in a way to continue the Methodists in both countries one family. This they now realized, much to their satisfaction.

I have said the preachers who composed the Christmas conference did hold human learning to be a desirable accomplishment. They knew, indeed, that learning and piety had no necessary connection, from the fact that there have been some eminent scholars, whose lives have evinced that they were far from being pious, and there have been many pious souls who have made no pretensions to human learning. Yet, when learning and piety are united, they are mutually beneficial in promoting the best interests of man. Such views prevailed among the preachers at that early period of our history. In proof of this, it may be sufficient to mention that, at the Christmas conference, they passed a resolution forthwith to erect a college, or public school, and to publish a plan of it immediately after the conference should adjourn.

The design was, to board and educate, and, if the finances would permit, clothe the sons of the travelling preachers, and poor orphans; and to provide a seminary, under the patronage of the church, for the education of



the children of our friends, where religion and learning might go hand in hand—where the means of instruction might be enjoyed by the young, without endangering their moral and religious principles through exposure to those temptations which were too common at most public schools. They also contemplated the benefit of those who might give evidence of being called to preach the gospel, but be so destitute of literary qualifications as to need some aid in this respect, before entering wholly into the work. In conformity with this resolution, a college was shortly after erected at Abingdon, Maryland; but it was soon after burned down. This was supposed to be the work of an incendiary. But so intent were the Methodists upon having a public school, that a suitable house was soon after purchased for that purpose in Baltimore. This also was, in a little time, wrapped in flames and destroyed! I could not believe, as some did, that these occurrences were judicial visitations. They were produced by incendiaries, and not the work of the beneficent Parent of the human family. And yet we trace the providence of God in them. He suffered wicked men to do us wrong, and we were enabled to trust in him, and throw ourselves upon the veracity of his

word, that all things work together for good to them that love him. But we would not indulge the impious thought, that bad men were impelled by him to burn our literary institutions, because he did not deem it proper, by a miracle, to protect us, as he protected Abraham and his family, when, small and few as we were, they sojourned among strangers and enemies.

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#### CHAPTER VIII.

From the Christmas conference Mr. Ware returns to the peninsula—Dr. Coke visits that section—Multitudes flock to hear the word, receive the sacrament, and get their children baptized—Mr. Ware's labours interrupted by sickness—He partially recovers and resolves to return home—Is induced to change his course by an extraordinary manifestation of divine influence at a meeting he attended, just about the time he had made arrangements to leave—Has a second attack—Did not attend conference, and wrote to be discontinued for at least one year—Was, however, continued, and appointed to Salem circuit—Had to contend with error—Saw many of his relatives brought into the church—Account of the introduction of Methodism into this section—Anecdote of Capt. Sears—Prosperity of the work—Reflections on the benefits of having the ordinances—Extension of the work—Mr. Ware is sent to Long Island, N. Y.—Crosses over on the main shore and visits New-Rochelle, Bedford, and Peekskill—Detained at a public house—His detention proves a blessing to the landlord and his wife.

FROM the Christmas conference I returned to the peninsula, in every part of which Methodism was flourishing, and the work of the

Lord gloriously prospering in our hands. The administration of the ordinances at our quarterly meetings was singularly owned of God. Vast multitudes attended, and the power of the Lord was present to wound and to heal. The whole peninsula seemed moved; and the people, in multitudes, flocked to hear Dr. Coke, who returned with us, and spent some time on this favoured shore. Never did I see any person who seemed to enjoy himself better than he did, while thousands pressed to him to have their children dedicated to the Lord by baptism, and to receive themselves the holy supper at his hands. Daily accessions were made to the church.

For a time I enjoyed myself well in this work. I preached with greater ease than formerly, for the hearts of the people seemed to be open to receive the word; and our class-meetings were little bethels to us. But I was suddenly attacked with a kidney complaint, that brought me near the door of death.

My sufferings were most excruciating. After the first paroxysm was over, doubts in swift succession arose in my mind with respect to my call to the ministry; and, being informed that my spiritual father, the respected Pedicord, was dead, I felt a wish, if it were the will of God, that I might follow him.

After passing through many sore conflicts relative to my duty with respect to preaching, I yielded to a belief that I might safely abandon for the present an itinerant life, if not the ministry. Under these impressions I went on to an appointment where few usually attended, with an intention, if the people came out, to give them a word of exhortation; and then write to the conference, which was soon to hold its session, not to depend on me to fill an appointment for at least one year, and direct my course toward home.

When I came in sight of the place I saw a number of carriages, and a large concourse of people collected; and I trembled at the sight. My watch told me it was past the time to commence, and I was entirely unprepared to meet the congregation. In this condition I said to myself, "What shall I do?—I must commence." I finally determined that I would read the chapter on which I first opened my Testament, and select a passage from it; and, if I were confounded before the people, I would confess I had been mistaken in my call.

The chapter on which I opened was the sixteenth of the Acts of the Apostles. This read, I selected for a text the latter clause of the 30th verse, "What must I do to be saved?" After announcing these words I proceeded in

the following strain:—"Since the world began there was never a proposition by man to man of greater import than that which the Philipian jailer made to Paul and Silas in the words of our text. He was doubtless a sinner, and saw himself in danger; and he feared—feared what? Not temporal, but eternal, death! He believed that something must be done to escape it, and that the apostles could tell him what to do.

"There is, we presume to say, in all men, at times, a conviction that they are in danger of eternal destruction, that something must be done to ensure their salvation, and that the ministers of the gospel can tell them what that something is. But alas! for you who are here to-day (pardon my tears!\*) I feel incompetent to answer the anxious inquiry which I perceive many are disposed to make about their salvation. Incompetent did I say? Forgive me! I will recall it. I do know what you may do—what you *must* do—what I begin to think, blessed be God, some of you *will* do—to be saved—will do and *be saved*, this very day. True, I cannot answer this inquiry in the style and manner I could wish. But is this a just cause for tears? No, I will dry them up, and press you with all my soul

\* These now began to flow freely.

to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, that you may be saved. If Paul himself were here, he would do the same."

This simple address was owned of God in deeply affecting the hearers. Tears flowed plentifully from the eyes of many; and all in the congregation were greatly moved. What a sudden transition! When I stood up, a gloom like the darkness of midnight rested upon me. Now not a vestige of a cloud remained. I continued by remarking:—

"Our text is the language of a true penitent. All such are concerned to know what they must do to be saved,

1. From ignorance and error in religion;
2. From the tyranny of sin;
3. From the curse of God's violated law;
4. From the damnation of hell."

To all which I replied by directing the humble penitent to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, that is, to venture on him for wisdom, strength, absolution, and purity of heart and life. When I was done, many desired the privilege of being present in the class-meeting, which was granted; and most of those who remained united with the church on probation.

I now went on cheerfully for a time. But it was not long before I was attacked by my



old complaint; and as my physician did not understand it, and doctored me for another, I was again, to appearance, brought near the gate of death. An elderly gentleman, however, providentially fell in where I was, and after some inquiry, informed me of the nature and seat of my disease. He recommended the free use of parsley (apium) tea, which I drank freely, and in about twelve hours it gave me signal relief.

In the spring of 1785, I did not attend the conference, but went home, and wrote to Mr. Asbury, declining to take an appointment for at least one year, on account of loss of health. I was, however, appointed to Salem circuit, with William Phœbus and Robert Sparks.\*

Here we had to contend with high-toned Calvinism on one hand, and mysticism on the other. But the Lord gave us some fruit of our labours, and many cheering hopes that the moral waste we were traversing by long and dreary rides would one day bud and blossom as the rose.

While on this circuit I had the pleasure of seeing many of my near relatives brought to the knowledge of God, and received into the church. Among these were my eldest and

\* The territory contained in this circuit is now occupied by more than half a score of preachers.

youngest sisters. The latter was from a child admired for the good natural qualities of her mind, and for her amiable disposition. In her, grace shone with peculiar brilliancy. She was eminently gifted in prayer, so much so that many of the preachers remarked they had seldom known her equal. Her husband was also an amiable and interesting man. It was through her influence that he was brought to embrace religion; and their house was long a pleasant home for the preachers.\*

\* This amiable man, being in feeble health, was advised by his physician to take new milk and sugar in a little *brandy*. By following this prescription he contracted a love for strong drink, and lost not only his religious enjoyment and character, but also his property and his little remaining health. He was greatly pitied, and the fullest confidence was placed in his integrity to the last; and there was some hope in his death. He was ardently attached to his pious wife; and in his last hours he could not bear her out of his sight a moment, but listened with deep interest to her encouraging assurances that God would receive the returning penitent, and was melted to tears while she offered up her ardent prayers in his behalf.

Ah, my sister, how often have I mingled my tears with thine, on account of this once amiable man, ensnared and overcome by the foul destroyer! He was lost to thee and to thy little ones, but, we trust, not eternally lost! Thou, my best beloved sister, hast ceased to weep and to suffer. Thou art for ever at rest; and thy children, the objects of thy tenderest solicitude when thou wast about to leave them orphans, have been provided for by Him who feeds the ravens, and, with one exception, are following thee in wisdom's ways; and that one, we hope, will be given thee in answer to a pious mother's prayers, long since registered on high!

This excellent woman was not only my natural sister, but my spiritual child. After I knew the blessedness of believing, I travelled sixty miles to see her and tell her what the Lord had done for me. During our first interview she became convinced of the necessity of religion; and she never after rested until she was brought to enjoy it.

Methodism had found its way into this section before us. The war which had just terminated had raged mostly in the upper part of New-Jersey; but here its effects were less sensibly felt. Many parts of Cumberland and Cape May were but thinly inhabited; and the inhabitants were generally favourable to the cause of the revolution. When the state of things in West Jersey, in consequence of its becoming the seat of war, rendered it next to impossible for the preachers to labour longer there, they turned their attention to the west; and one of them visited Cumberland and Cape May.\* His manner was, to let his horse take his own course, and, on coming to a house, to inform the family that he had come to warn them and the people of their neighbourhood to prepare to meet their God; and also to direct them to notify their neighbours that

\* We learn from Mr. Ware that the name of this preacher was James.—EDITOR.

on such a day one would, by divine permission, be there to deliver a message from God to them, noting his appointment in a book kept for that purpose ; and then, if he found they were not offended, to sing and pray with them, and depart. Some families were much affected, and seemed to hold themselves bound to do as he directed. Others told him he need give himself no farther trouble, for they would neither invite their neighbours, nor open their doors to receive him if he came.

This course soon occasioned an excitement and alarm through many parts. Some seemed to think him a messenger from the invisible world. Others said, "He is mad." Many, however, gave out the appointments as directed; and when the time came, he would be sure to be there. By these means the minds of the people were stirred up, and many were awakened. While thus labouring to sow the seed of the gospel, he came one evening to the house of Captain Sears, and having a desire to put up for the night, made application to the captain accordingly. Captain S. was then in the yard, surrounded by a number of barking dogs, which kept up such a noise that he could not at first hear what the preacher said. At this, the captain became very angry, and stormed boisterously at them, call-

ing them many hard names, for which the preacher reproved him. When they became silent so that he could be distinctly heard, he renewed his request to stay over night. The captain paused a long time, looking steadily at him, and then said, "I hate to let you stay the worst of any man I ever saw; but as I never refused a stranger a night's lodging in all my life, you may alight."

Soon after entering the house, he requested a private room where he might retire. The family were curious to know for what purpose he retired, and contrived to ascertain, when it was found that he was on his knees. After continuing a long time in secret devotion, he came into the parlour and found supper prepared. Captain Sears seated himself at table, and invited his guest to come and partake with him. He came to the table, and said, "With your permission, captain, I will ask the blessing of God upon our food before we partake;" to which the captain assented.

During the evening the preacher had occasion to reprove his host several times. In a few days the captain attended a military parade; and his men, having heard that the man who had made so much noise in the country had spent a night with him, inquired of him what he thought of this singular per-



son. "Do you ask what I think of the stranger?" said he, "I know he is a man of God." "Pray how do you know that, captain?" inquired some. "How do I know it?" he replied. "I will tell you honestly—the devil trembled in me at his reproofs." And so it was. The evil spirit found no place to remain in his heart.\* By such means the work was commenced in this region, and spread among the people.

The year 1785 passed away much more pleasantly than I expected. My health was much improved; and the gloom of mind which had nearly driven me from the itinerant ranks now seldom troubled me. The presiding elder appointed to attend the quarterly meetings in Jersey was an exceedingly popular man, and his presence gave a consequence to these meetings which left no doubt on our minds of the advantage of having men in holy orders among us; and we praised God for the providence which had brought about this new order of things, and established us as a branch of his militant church. Two years had now elapsed since the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America,

\* I have spent many a comfortable night under the hospitable roof of Captain Sears. He lived long an example of piety—the stranger's host and comforter, and especially the preacher's friend.



during which time our harmony continued the same as it was before, while our labour had been crowned with much greater success, in consequence of having had the ordinances of God duly administered among us. In these two years we admitted thirty-four preachers, and had an accession of three thousand eight hundred and three members. We also greatly enlarged our borders, extending our labours to Georgia at the south, and the great valley of the Mississippi at the west.

In 1786 my field of labour was Long Island, in the state of New-York. But I did not confine myself to the Island. With the consent of my presiding elder, a local brother was employed to take my appointments, and I visited New-Rochelle, across the sound, twenty-five miles above New-York. A class had been formed in this place previously to the taking of New-York by the British. But at this time there was not a Methodist on the east side of the Hudson, above New-York.

From New-Rochelle I went up to Bedford and Peekskill. In every place where I went the people flocked to hear the word; and I was treated, generally, with great kindness. At Croton, Lieut. Governor Van Courtland and lady took me to their house, and charmed me with their Christian courtesy and hospitality.

At Bedford, on Christmas day, I dwelt largely on the universality of the atonement, with which subject I felt deeply affected myself, as the people also appeared to be. When I was through, a Calvinist minister stood up in the congregation and accused me of preaching false doctrine. The sum of his argument was, "If Christ died for all, then must all be saved; but we know some are lost, therefore he did not die for all." It was an unfortunate time for him to attack the doctrine in the manner he did, as the feelings of the people were evidently enlisted in favour of it while I was endeavouring to illustrate and enforce it with tears. They were therefore on my side.

Before the minister sat down, he requested the people not to let any thing he had said so prejudice their minds against the young man as to call in question his piety. Here he was interrupted by an elderly man, who arose and said, "I am surprised, Mr. H——s, that you have so little discernment. What you have said, instead of exciting our prejudice against our young friend, who has preached the truth to us, has, on the contrary, filled us with disgust against yourself. There is not a person present but must condemn your spirit; and very few, I hope, who do not despise the sentiments you have advanced. If there be one here

who approves of the rude attack you have made upon this youth and stranger among us, let him get up and defend you." At this sharp rebuke, Mr. H. arose to defend himself; but the people manifested their unwillingness to hear him, by rising up and beginning to talk. A Mr. Eames then, in the audience of the people, invited me to go with him and make his house my home; and to preach the same doctrine to his neighbours. I accepted of this kind invitation, and went.

When we arrived at Mr. Eames' house, he introduced me to his wife as a Methodist preacher, and said, "You know I told you God would send the Methodist preachers among us, when I dreamed that I saw Mr. Wesley riding through the country with his Bible open in his hand." After spending a short time with this pious and interesting family, during which I preached repeatedly and formed a class, I set out on my return to New-Rochelle, but was overtaken by one of the most dreadful snow-storms I ever witnessed. I was accordingly driven to the necessity of putting up at an inn, where I was detained for a week. The landlady was tenderly impressed the first time I spoke to her on the subject of religion; but the inn-keeper himself, though civil, appeared to be out of

my reach. Both of them were very fond of singing ; and as my voice was good, they seemed much delighted with some spiritual songs which I sung for them. On the third night of this tremendous storm, while sitting around the cheerful fire, listening to the howling of the wind, and the beating of snow and hail against the windows, as if resolved on a forcible entry, I perceived my host and hostess were pensive ; so I sung them one of my favourite pieces, with which they were much affected. I then kneeled down to pray ; and they, for the first time, fell upon their knees. After prayer, I retired, leaving them both in tears. He afterward, during my stay, made many efforts to resume his former gayety ; but his vivacity was gone.\*

\* After thirty years I was again appointed to Long Island, where my host visited me. On meeting me, he said, " Father Ware, I am happy to see you once more. Have you forgotten the snow-storm which brought you and salvation to my house ?"

## CHAPTER IX.

In 1787 Dr. Coke again visits this country—Gives dissatisfaction to some of the preachers by changing the conference—Mr. Whatcoat accompanies Dr. Coke, as a superintendent, appointed by Mr. Wesley—Some uneasiness about the manner of doing business in the conference—Feelings of respect entertained by the conference for Mr. Wesley—Fear that Mr. Asbury would be called away—Brief notices of deceased preachers—Mr. Ware volunteers to accompany Mr. Tunnell to the Holston country—Character and state of the country—Moral condition—The work of God prospers notwithstanding the difficulties it has to contend with—Call for preachers down the Holston—Mr. Ware agrees to go and form a new circuit—His way infested with savages—Narrow escapes—A woman killed by the Indians near where he was preaching—Preaches her funeral—The people favourably affected—Crosses over to French Broad—Finds some who had been Methodists—Soon raises a society—Suffers reproach on account of the conduct of wicked men who called themselves preachers—Narrowly escapes from a company of infuriated men who became offended at him—Arrives at a friend's house, and thanks God for his deliverance.

IN the spring of 1787, Dr. Coke visited us again, and called the preachers to meet in conference at Baltimore, on the first day of May. The liberty he took in changing the time and place of holding the conference gave serious offence to many of the preachers. But this was not all, nor even the chief matter, which caused some trouble at this conference. Mr. Wesley had appointed Mr. Whatcoat a superintendent, and instructed Dr. Coke to

introduce a usage among us to which, I may safely say, there was not one of the preachers inclined to submit, much as they loved and honoured him. Mr. Wesley had been in the habit of calling his preachers together, not to legislate, but to confer. Many of them he found to be excellent counsellors, and he heard them respectfully on the weighty matters which were brought before them; but the right to *decide* all questions he reserved to himself. This he deemed the more excellent way; and as we had volunteered and pledged ourselves to obey, he instructed the doctor, conformably to his own usage, to put as few questions to vote as possible, saying, "If you, brother Asbury, and brother Whatcoat are agreed, it is enough." To place the power of deciding all questions discussed, or nearly all, in the hands of the superintendents, was what could never be introduced among us—a fact which we thought Mr. Wesley could not but have known, had he known us as well as we ought to have been known by Dr. Coke. After all, we had none to blame so much as ourselves. In the first effusion of our zeal we had adopted a rule binding ourselves to obey Mr. Wesley; and this rule must be rescinded, or we must be content, not only to receive Mr. Whatcoat as one of our superintendents, but also, as our



brethren of the British conference, with barely discussing subjects, and leaving the decision of them to two or three individuals. This was the chief cause of our rescinding the rule. All, however, did not vote to rescind it. Some thought it would be time enough to do so when our superintendents should claim to decide questions independently of the conference, which, it was confidently believed, they never would do.

We were under many and great obligations to Mr. Wesley, and also to Dr. Coke, who had done much to serve us, and all at their own expense. As to Mr. Wesley, there were none of us disposed to accuse him of a desire to tyrannize over us, and, in consequence, to withdraw our love and confidence from him. But there was, perhaps, with some, a lack of cautiousness not to cause grief to such a father. There were also suspicions entertained by some of the preachers, and, perhaps, by Mr. Asbury himself, that, if Mr. Whatcoat were received as a superintendent, Mr. Asbury would be recalled. For this none of us were prepared.

At the conference of 1787, we had to record the death of two young men, who had fallen in the itinerant ranks, namely, John Lambert and James Thomas. The former was a

native of New-Jersey, taken from the common walks of life. He had, in four years, (when the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized,) without the parade of classical learning, or any regular theological training, actually attained to an eminence in the pulpit which no ordinary man could reach by the aid of any human means whatever. He was most emphatically a primitive Methodist preacher, preaching out of the pulpit as well as in it. The graces with which he was eminently adorned, were intelligence, innocence, and love. These imparted a glow of eloquence to all he said and did. The other, Thomas, was young, sprightly, blameless, and much esteemed as a pious and good preacher.

At this conference I volunteered, with two other young men, who esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than earthly treasures, to accompany Mr. Tunnell to the Holston country, now called East Tennessee.

The district of country where we laboured is finely watered by five rivers, the principal of which is the Holston. On the margin of these rivers the soil is deep and immensely rich. Here, of course, the first inhabitants fixed their dwellings. We found the population spread over a territory of country equal in extent to East Jersey, almost wholly desti-

tute of the gospel. That people everywhere need the gospel, no Christian would deny. But these, especially, needed it. In almost all new settlements there are always some to be found, whose principles and practice exert a pestilential influence on the morals of society. In this section there were many of this description—refugees from justice. Some there were who had borrowed money, or were otherwise in debt, and left their creditors and securities to do the best they could. Persons of such principles cannot be expected to exert themselves in promoting moral order in society. But there were others whose influence was much more pernicious, especially against the introduction and progress of Methodism. These were such as had been guilty of some heinous or scandalous crime, and fled from justice. Some of them had left their wives, and were living with other women. Among these there were a few who had made a profession of religion, and two in particular who had been preachers. In their wickedness they retained all their bigotry in favour of their opinions, and their inveterate prejudices against the Methodists. They were among our most violent opposers. They laboured hard, and, with some people successfully, to brand us as false prophets, because

we held it possible for men to fall from grace, and that infants were proper subjects of baptism. One of them said, publicly, that he verily believed the greatest sin he ever committed in his life, was that of yielding to the desire of his wife to have their first child baptized.

But, notwithstanding the violent opposition we had to contend with from these and other causes, God prospered us in our work. Methodism had, indeed, reached this country before us. In many of the settlements we found some who had heard the Methodists preach, and they hailed us with a hearty welcome. Societies were formed, and a number of log-chapels erected; and, on the circuit, three hundred members were received the first year.

In the fall of this year, (1787,) our presiding elder received letters from persons low down the Holston and French Broad, deploring their entire destitution of the gospel, and entreating him, if possible, to send them a preacher. These letters he read at the quarterly meeting conference; and it was agreed that I should go, and see if I could form a circuit in those parts. Accordingly I went. There were many things which rendered itinerating in that section of the country, at

the time I went, peculiarly painful to a person like myself.\* I was still young in the ministry, and deeply sensible of my want of qualifications to act well the part of a pioneer ; but, having pledged myself to go, and having evidence that my feeble efforts had been crowned with some success, nothing could deter me from redeeming my pledge.

The winters are shorter and the climate less frigid in East Tennessee than in New-Jersey ; but sometimes the cold, for a few days, is intense. At these times, especially when I had to ford rivers and creeks at the risk of life, as I often had to do, and to lodge in open log-cabins, with light bed-clothing, and frequently with several children in the same bed, I was much exposed to taking cold ; and travelling there, on these accounts, was rendered exceedingly crossing to nature. But, in addition to these, much of the time my path was infested with savage men, the deadly foe of white men, who had but too justly incurred their resentment ; and more subtle and terrible enemies, among human beings, could not be imagined, than were the native red men, incensed at the wrongs inflicted upon

\* I have always considered this a season of the most severe sufferings I have passed through, in an itinerant life of more than forty years.

them by the whites. Several families and individuals had been murdered by them in places directly on the routes I had to travel; and once, at least, I narrowly escaped being murdered or taken prisoner. My course led through a fine bottom covered chiefly with the crab-apple tree. I passed along very slowly, making my observations upon the richness of the soil, the timber, and grass, which, at that late season, was yet green, and had thoughts of halting to muse a little in the grove; but, recollecting, at the moment, that I had heard a rumour about hostile Indians in that vicinity, I concluded not to stop, but rather mend my pace. I had now approached a lofty grove, when, suddenly, my horse stopped, snorted, and wheeled about. As he wheeled I caught a glimpse of an Indian, but at too great a distance to reach me with his rifle. I gave my horse the reins, and hastened to the nearest settlement to give the alarm. I had been told that some horses were singularly afraid of an Indian. Be that as it may, I have reason to suppose that the sudden fright which mine took at seeing one, was the means, under God, of saving me from death or captivity.

At another time, while I was preaching at the house of a man who had invited us



by letter to visit their settlement, we were alarmed with the cry of "Indians!" The terror this cry excited at that time none can imagine, except those who witnessed it. Instantly every man flew to his rifle, and sallied forth to ascertain the ground of the alarm. On coming out, we saw two lads running with all speed, and screaming, "The Indians have killed mother!" We followed them about a quarter of a mile, and witnessed the affecting scene of a woman weltering in her blood. It was what the people called a good sugar day; and Mrs. Carter, a brother's wife of the man at whose house we had met, chose to stay at home for the purpose of making sugar rather than go to meeting, though it was in sight, and several of her friends had endeavoured to persuade her to go with them.

The maple grove, or sugar-bush, was, near their dwelling, skirted on the side next the river by what they call a canebrake. Here Mrs. C. sat by the side of a large buck-eye tree, which had fallen down, spinning and watching her sugar, while her sons were gathering wood. They happened, at the time, to be at a distance, and in the direction of their uncle's house. The Indians were concealed in the canebrake; and, coming up sily, behind the fallen tree, so as not to be

discovered by her, they drove the tomahawk into her head before she knew they were near. The Indian who did the bloody deed was seen by the boys just as he struck their mother; but they were at a sufficient distance to make their escape.

The next day we attended the funeral, and almost the whole settlement were out, and were much affected during the discourse I delivered on the occasion. It was my practice, when any peculiar effect attended my unpremeditated remarks, of committing them, as nearly as I could from recollection, to writing. So I did in this case. I held my Bible in my hand, and said:—

“I have been listening, my brethren, to your conversation respecting the afflicting occurrence which has brought us together. You think, from what you discover, that the Indians are numerous in this vicinity, sufficiently so to cut all of you off in your present defenceless state; and you propose, without delay, to provide a place of refuge for your exposed wives and children, to which they may flee in times of danger, and be safe from the tomahawks of your merciless enemies. In doing this you would doubtless do well. But there is a death more dreadful than the most ferocious savage can inflict! Against

this I have not heard any talk of a defence. I am come to tell you how you may escape this death, of which, I doubt not, your consciences have told you there is danger, and to point you a place of safety, for yourselves, your wives, and your little ones. Some of you may doubt my ability to do this. But, see! I hold my Bible in my hand. In this blessed book the will of God our Saviour is revealed, and brought down to the weakest capacity. St. Paul has cast up the sum of good which Heaven kindly wills to all men. And here it is: 1 Tim., 2d. chap., ‘God our Saviour will have all to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth.’ Salvation, not only from savage, but from infernal cruelty! This is the *sum*, and coming to the knowledge of the truth is the *means*. Do any of you ask what is implied by coming to the knowledge of the truth? It is to be brought to know that Christ, by his sacrificial death, has made atonement for all our sins, original and actual; and that this is the ‘man who receiveth sinners.’

“Again, I ask, can any of you doubt of my sincerity, when I have taken my life in my hand, to bring these glad tidings to your doors? Tell me, my dear people, what would you have to fear, if Jesus were your friend?

The winds and the seas—the devils and the dead—were subject to his word! And he is still the same almighty Jesus! With you I mingle my tears. You weep for your departed, murdered friend; and say, Alas! that it had not been. She was, you say, an affectionate wife, a tender mother, and one of the best of neighbours. She was the better prepared to meet her tragical death. But, dear woman, she sinned against her own life. Had she been with us at the house of worship, she would still have lived to comfort and cheer her family and friends. I mean not to insinuate that her death was a judicial punishment. I cannot believe that God sent the savage to murder this amiable wife, mother, and friend, because she did not attend our preaching. And yet we trace a providence in her death. God, who numbers the hairs of our heads, did not see cause to interpose a special providence to save her. In this sense her enemy was permitted to perpetrate this cruel act. At the same time God did much to draw her from the place of danger. In the first place, his providence directed that there should be preaching near, at the hour the prowling savage was approaching the fatal spot; and in the second, that her friends should call her attention to it, and solicit her

to go with them to hear the word of salvation which the Lord had sent unto them. Ah! my sister, for such I will style thee, I sorrow much on thy account, but not without hope. I have seen thee tenderly affected, have heard thee bewail thy native depravity and actual sins, and more than once seen thy countenance lighted up with a celestial ray of hope. Yesterday I marked thy vacant seat. It was the first time. I had been told that much pains had been taken to prejudice thy feeling mind against this way. By whom? Those who are in affinity with him who said to the Son of God, 'All this will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me?' And are these they who have gloried in keeping thee from the place where Christ was preached? Alas! these are thy murderers. They bound thee with the hempen cord of prejudice, and delivered thee into the hands of savage men. But he, I hope, who 'was in all points tempted as we are,' had pity on thine infirmities, and saved thee from the gulf of eternal ruin, to the brink of which they who had conspired against thy soul had brought thee.

"I did hear one of you say, '*It was to be so; the dear woman was born to die by the hand of an Indian!*' Rather say, she died by the hands of her professed, but deluded friends!

She was born a candidate for immortal honours, as we all were. Such is the import of the words I have quoted, 'God our Saviour will have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth.' Hitherto my labours among you have been apparently abortive. One bud, indeed, appeared; but before it fully bloomed, it was plucked. And what shall I now say? Shall I bid you adieu, and leave you to waste your powers in your worldly pursuits, and in self-defence against the red men of the wilderness? I am invited to more places than I can attend. Probably in some of those places which I have neglected, to serve you, I might have succeeded in winning souls to Christ, and raising up a little family with whom I could have felt myself at home."

After concluding my remarks, which were designed to improve the occasion for the benefit of the living, many came around me, and some who had not heard me before, and entreated with tears that I would not abandon them. The next time I came there, ten or twelve united with purpose of heart to seek the Lord.

From this settlement I went down to the lowest on the Holston. I found the people assembled in several places, in a state of great



alarm, devising means of defence against an enemy from whom they expected no mercy. Many seemed struck with astonishment that I should hazard my life to visit them at such a time. They were full of kindness, heard with interest, and guarded me from place to place, as I travelled about.

From this section I crossed over to French Broad river. This journey was dreary enough. No regular road, and for much of the way not a vestige of one to be seen, except the marked trees leading to the lower settlements on the French Broad, in the vicinity of the Cherokees. Nor was there a cabin to be seen. I was sometimes roused from my monotonous reverie by flocks of deer, wild turkeys, or an affrighted bear, dashing through the underbrush.

Among the white children of the forest inhabiting the region I visited, there were some Methodists, who had come from distant parts, and brought their religion with them. These hailed me as a welcome messenger; and, leading the way, many followed them in the service of the Lord. So in a short time we had a flourishing society; and there were men capable of taking a part in conducting its operations.

On the French Broad, and other parts of the circuit, I had nothing to fear from the

Indians. But I had to stem a torrent of opposition from another quarter. Not indeed from the people at first, for they received me kindly. But there were a few preachers whose characters stood fair, and a number of others most decidedly Antinomian in their sentiments, who came here as professed ministers of the gospel; and these succeeded for a time in gaining the attention of the people, and prejudicing their minds against the Methodists, and, finally, against all religion. Of these, some of the most gifted turned out very badly. Two of them,\* the loudest in their defence of Antinomian principles, and their opposition against us, eloped under circumstances of great scandal, having ruined the domestic felicity of several families. This had a tendency to bring the profession of the ministry into much contempt.

Some time after the infamous conduct of these men became notorious, while travelling to visit a new place, I was taken sick upon the road, and found it necessary to halt and lie down in the woods. It soon began to rain freely, which admonished me that I must go. After several attempts I succeeded in mount-

\* One of these, in haranguing the people on the subject of the impossibility of falling from grace, assured them that no *falls* after conviction could endanger the salvation of any.

ing my horse, and proceeded on, so slowly, however, that I did not reach a settlement through which I had to pass, until night came on. I accordingly called at the first house, and solicited shelter from the rain during the night, but was abruptly refused. I had been told that there lived in the neighbourhood a wealthy Quaker, and requested the churl to direct me to his house, which he did with a very significant shrug. I soon reached the house; but instead of a kind-hearted Friend, I found a sarcastic Deist. He soon gave me to understand that my intended visit, with my character, was well known to them, and that neither he nor his neighbours had any great liking for *priests of any kind*; he thought, therefore, that I might as well pass them by. I told him that whatever the differences of our religious views might be, there was a debt of humanity which we owed to each other, and if there was any flesh in his heart he would not deny a fellow-being a shelter from the storm during the night. He replied, "Young man, if thou wouldst follow some honest calling, honest men would make thee welcome. There," said he, "is neighbour Hodge, whose wife is old and ugly; he may give thee lodgings." By this, with some other indecent allusions, I understood what he meant, and

that the scandal brought upon religion by those persons named above was employed to disparage us, and said to myself as I rode off, "Alas! how has the Antinomian wolf, in sheep's clothing, infested this new world."\*

Old Mr. Hodge was indeed much less inhuman than the apostate Quaker, for he permitted me to tarry, provided I would turn my horse into the woods, and take my lodging on the floor-planks. So, after turning my horse loose and changing my wet clothes, while sitting by the fire, I placed my hand on the old man's knee and said, "Father, you have not, I presume, lived to this good old age without having had many serious thoughts on the subject of religion?" He gave me an angry look, and replied that I need say nothing to him on the subject of religion. He believed all the professors he had known were hypocrites; and the preachers a set of rascals, no better than pickpockets. He supposed I was one; but, said he, "*We don't want more*

\* In an itinerant life of nearly half a century, and sometimes as pioneer, I have been thrown upon the hospitality of all sorts of people; but I beg to be delivered from the necessity of approaching the door of an infidel or a fanatic, above all others. In such I have always found the milk of human kindness dried up. Who but an infidel, having ample accommodations, would insult a stranger and turn him from his door, to spend the night in the chilling rain, barely because his occupation was that of a preacher of the gospel?

*of ye here.* He then ordered his wife to "bear a hand," and give him his supper; and, when it was ready, they sat down and partook without inviting me, or seeming to care any thing about me. This was not, however, a common thing with the people of that country. They generally made me welcome, and treated me with great kindness.

In addition to the difficulties I had to encounter from the causes I have mentioned, an unpleasant occurrence took place which produced others. A dispute had arisen between a Colonel Tipton and the governor, which terminated in a short civil war. The colonel was opposed to the execution of certain state laws in his section, to which the governor resolved to compel him and his party to submit, by the employment of a military force. Coming to one of my appointments on French Broad, in the afternoon of one of the coldest days I ever witnessed in that country, I found a large company of armed men there, going to attack Colonel Tipton in his own house, where he had fortified himself; and they were endeavouring to persuade the men who came to hear preaching to go with them. Captain Turner, at whose house we were met, was from home. Not observing that many of them were intoxicated, I ventured to address



them, and endeavour to dissuade them from their purpose. But they at once concluded that I was Tipton's friend, and became outrageous. Some were for despatching me at once. Others deemed it better to take me before the governor, who was about ten miles distant, and have me tried as a spy. This was a device of some of my friends, with a view of giving me a chance to make my escape. While they disputed, I withdrew to an adjoining room, and hastened to the stable by a back way, saddled my horse, and was out of their reach before they knew I was off. Thus I escaped the vengeance of infuriated men, but became exposed to imminent danger from another quarter. It was now near night; and I had twelve or fifteen miles to ride in order to reach the first settlement. The river I had to ford was fifty rods wide, and filled with floating ice, which, in some places, was congealed into large cakes, rendering the passage extremely difficult and dangerous. But my noble beast carried me safely over.

I had a very imperfect knowledge of the way; and, as the marks on the trees were my principal guide, it was matter of much doubt whether I could find it in the night. As I feared, so it happened. I took a path



which soon came to an end. By this time I had become so chilled that I could scarcely keep myself awake upon my horse. I was apprized of my danger, dismounted immediately, and ran to and fro until I became warm. After taking several cow-paths which led from the river into the forest, all of which shortly came to an end, I concluded to throw the bridle on my horse's neck, and let him take his own course; and, a little before midnight, he brought me to the house where I wished to go. The night was so exceedingly cold, and the house of my friend so open, that he and his family had found it more comfortable to remain up and keep a good fire, than to retire to rest. In this condition I found them; and never was a good country fire and a kind reception by friends more welcome to my feelings. After recounting to them the adventures of the day, how I had escaped from the enraged fury of men and the fierceness of the wintry frost, through the instrumentality, first, of the sagacity of kind friends, and then that of my faithful horse, I called upon them to unite with me in returning thanks to the Christian's God, who himself is the preserver of man and beast.

The men who put me in fear went and besieged Colonel Tipton's house; but Colonel

Maxwell, who was in his interest, came upon them unawares, and totally routed them, taking from them their arms, baggage, and horses. I afterward met a number of these men returning without their arms, and among them some whom I had admonished not to go, and was strongly inclined to remind them of the admonition I had given them; but I concluded that they were sufficiently mortified already, and that it might only arouse their indignation against me, so I let them pass.

## CHAPTER X.

First conference, in Holston, in 1788—Bishop Asbury detained for company to pass through the hostile tribes of Indians—Preachers labour during the time—The work of God breaks out—General Russell and lady first fruits—The effect of their change upon others—Mr. Ware is appointed to East New-River circuit—Difficulties of travelling in that new country—Storm on the mountains—Suffering and exposure in consequence of not being able to cross a stream—Frequent baptisms and their effects upon the minds of the people—Anecdote of a young Baptist preacher—Mr. Asbury passes through the circuit and takes Mr. Ware with him to North Carolina—Prospect on the summit of the Blue Ridge—Conference at M'Knight's chapel—Mr. Wesley's name restored to the Minutes—At this conference Mr. Ware is appointed to Caswell circuit—Is poorly clad—Loses his horse—Finds friends and goes on—Visits a neighbourhood of Episcopalians—Administers baptism—The power of God is revealed among the people—A blessed work follows—He is appointed to a district—Conversion of General Bryan and lady, with many other members of their family—Anecdote of Mrs. Jones—Wonderful manifestations of the power and grace of God at a quarterly meeting—Liberal offer made Mr. Ware to remain with an aged couple, and take charge of them and their business, which he declines, and leaves the south to return to his friends in New-Jersey.

OUR first conference in Holston was held in 1788. As the road by which Bishop Asbury was to come, was infested with hostile savages, so that it could not be travelled except by considerable companies together, he was detained for a week after the time appointed to commence it. But we were not

idle ; and the Lord gave us many souls in the place where we were assembled, among whom were General Russell and lady, the latter a sister of the illustrious Patrick Henry. I mention these particularly, because they were the first fruits of our labours at this conference.

On the sabbath we had a crowded audience ; and Mr. Tunnell preached an excellent sermon, which produced great effect. The sermon was followed by a number of powerful exhortations. When the meeting closed, Mrs. Russell came to me and said, " I thought I was a Christian ; but, sir, I am not a Christian—I am the veriest sinner upon earth. I want you and Mr. Mastin to come with Mr. Tunnell to our house, and pray for us, and tell us what we must do to be saved." So we went and spent much of the afternoon in prayer, especially for Mrs. Russell. But she did not obtain deliverance. Being much exhausted, the preachers retired to a pleasant grove, near at hand, to spend a short time. After we had retired, the general, seeing the agony of soul under which his poor wife was labouring, read to her, by the advice of his pious daughter, Mr. Fletcher's charming address to mourners, as contained in his Appeal. At length we heard the word " Glory !" often

repeated, accompanied with the clapping of hands. We hastened to the house, and found Mrs. Russell praising the Lord, and the general walking the floor and weeping bitterly, uttering, at the same time, this plaintive appeal to the Saviour of sinners: "O Lord, thou didst bless my dear wife while thy poor servant was reading to her—hast thou not a blessing also for me?" At length he sat down, quite exhausted. This scene was in a high degree interesting to us. To see the old soldier and statesman—the proud opposer of godliness, trembling, and earnestly inquiring what he must do to be saved, was an affecting sight. But the work ended not here. The conversion of Mrs. Russell, whose zeal, good sense, and amiableness of character, were proverbial, together with the penitential grief so conspicuous in the general, made a deep impression on the minds of many; and numbers were brought in before the conference closed. The general rested not until he knew his adoption; and he continued a faithful member of the church, and an official member, after he became eligible for office, constantly adorning the doctrine of God our Saviour, unto the end of his life.

From this conference I was appointed to East New-River, with a colleague younger

than myself. We were instructed to enlarge our borders from a two, to a four weeks' circuit. This we did with great ease. There was not within the bounds of our circuit a religious meeting except those held by us. The hearts and houses of the people were open to receive us, so that we hesitated not to call at any dwelling which might first come in our way when we wanted refreshment. Here had been a goodly number gathered in the preceding year. These needed to be nursed with care. Of these we lost, by death, removal, and otherwise, during the year, twenty; and we received eighty into the church.

During the mild season we had little inconvenience to encounter in travelling this circuit. But when dreary winter set in, our sufferings and privations were severe in the extreme. We had to cross Walker's mountain in our route. Early one morning, toward the close of the year, I commenced its steep ascent. Much rain had fallen the previous night; but it was a lovely morning, the air being exceedingly soft and pleasant for the season. When I had gained the summit of a ridge or spur of the mountain, and looked toward the heights yet to be ascended, where winter was collecting its howling forces, my heart failed me, and I began to retrace my steps. Where I



stood it was quite calm; and when I cast my eyes to the east, not a cloud was to be seen. But on the mountain's top all was raging tempest. The wind blew from the southwest, and the cloud, which had been hid from my view by the mountain, arose, and in thick and dark columns, loaded with vapour congealed into snow, which, as the sun shone upon it, had the appearance of a solid body of water, rolling in awful majesty, and threatening a general inundation. This, with the tremendous commotion of the agitated elements upon the summit of the mountain, presented the most terrific scene I had ever witnessed. I fled with all possible speed from this approaching cloud, which I supposed to be surcharged with rain; but it ultimately proved to be snow.

I then directed my course to the gap through which I had to pass; and being somewhat sheltered from the wind by the mountain, I supposed the storm had abated. But when I came to dispute this passage with the furious gale, pelting me with snow and hail at every step, it called for all the resolution I possessed to force the defile in the face of so formidable a foe. It was almost night when I came in sight of the hamlet for which I had long been anxiously looking; but, alas!

a creek which crossed the way had so swollen by the late rain that I could not pass it. The sun had gone down clear ; and the cold was intense, and becoming more so every minute. I called aloud for assistance until I became hoarse ; but no one answered. Seeing near me a few stacks of hay, with a number of cattle shivering around them, as they appeared to be my only resort to save myself from perishing, and furnish my horse with something to eat, I repaired to them, placed my horse in a situation to eat, and provided as well as I could to make myself a bed of the hay to spend the night, unless some one should come to feed the stock, who might assist me over the creek. It was soon dark, and no one came. My blood began to be chilled ; and I felt that to stay there was to jeopard my life. So I resolved on returning to a sorry-looking hut which I had seen about five miles back, and seek for shelter there. I found the hut warm, and inhabited by a young couple with two small children. Whether they thought me intoxicated, or what else, (as the cold had very much affected my speech,) I do not know ; but the man gave me to understand, at once, that I could not stay there. I looked at him, and smiling, said, that would depend upon our comparative

strength. It was true he might demand the assistance of his wife to put me out; but I fondly hoped she would be on my side. At this he laughed pleasantly, and began to stir up the fire. When they ascertained who I was they treated me with great kindness, and furnished me every thing in their power to render me and my beast comfortable. In the morning I baptized their children; and the man kindly accompanied me to a safe fording place, where I crossed, and soon reached the house of a friend, where I had an appointment the preceding day. But my sufferings ended not with that day, nor have they terminated yet. My feet were sore for a long time; and they have ever since been subject to a death-like coldness, for which there is no remedy this side of the grave.

“The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart;” nor is that the least of these statutes which provides a fold for the lambs of the flock. Hence those who followed Christ as their shepherd rejoiced to hear him say, “Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” There were many on this circuit, both of those who had taken the Lord for their portion and those who as yet had not, who manifested a desire to have him the

God of their children, and therefore presented them to be baptized. Of the latter class, the hearts of the parents were usually touched when their children were dedicated to God in accordance with his own institution. Sometimes the scene was truly affecting, when the thought was impressed upon the minds of parents that their children, according to the declaration of the Saviour, belonged to the kingdom of heaven, while they did not.

I cannot but regret that I did not keep, for my own satisfaction, a record of the number of these lambs of Christ's flock which I have held in my arms, and dedicated to Him. I doubt if any travelling preacher could produce a more extended list. For a time I attempted this task. But in Holston, Clinch, French Broad, and New-River, there were so many children presented for baptism that I found it difficult, and gave it up. Alas! who can retrospect his life, and find nothing to regret!

As the Presbyterians on New-River had no minister, they brought many of their children to me for baptism. Neither had the Baptists, of whom there were a few, any minister when we came on the circuit. A young licentiate of that order came, however, before we left. He appeared to possess much of the spirit of love, and was with me several days.

He frequently exhorted and closed our meetings by prayer. He was present one day at a meeting in a Presbyterian settlement, where several children were brought forward to be baptized. On this occasion I stated some of our reasons for baptizing infants, and then called on my young friend to close as usual. He rose up, and to our surprise, whether by previous understanding or not I cannot say, a Baptist woman in the congregation presented him her child. He took it into his arms, pronounced a blessing upon it, and returned it; and then proceeded to say, "Jesus took little children into his arms, not to baptize, but to bless them. No, my friends, neither Jesus nor his disciples ever spent their time in baby-sprinkling." Here he paused, holding his hand to his eye as if in great pain; and the people were at a loss to know what was the matter. He finally told them that a hornet had stung him in the eye; and the woman upon whose child he had pronounced a blessing stated that she knew a remedy for it, at which he immediately left and went with her, and I never saw him after.

I passed two years in this country very pleasantly to myself, and so it would have been in Greenland itself, with the sentiments and feelings I possessed.



In the spring of 1789, Bishop Asbury visited my circuit, and took me with him to North Carolina. From New River to the "Flower Gap," a distance not exactly remembered, we gradually ascended till we reached the summit of the Blue Ridge, on the border of North Carolina. When we arrived here, I was enchanted, and should have spent hours in surveying the scene below, had I been alone; but it was all familiar to Bishop Asbury, who immediately dismounted and began to descend the mountain. I, of course, must follow him, which I did with a sublimity of feeling that I cannot describe. From this lofty eminence you see the world spread out below you, extended in one continued grove, excepting here and there a spot, until vision is lost in the blue expanse which limits its powers.

Our conference was held this year at M'Knight's church, commencing on the 11th of April. It was one of the most interesting conferences I had attended. Great grace rested on both preachers and people, and much good resulted. There was much tender solicitude felt and expressed on account of Mr. Wesley. He was grieved with the manner in which his name had been expunged from the Minutes; and it was the wish of the



conference to introduce it again in the most respectful way they could. Accordingly they adopted the question and answer contained in the minutes for the year, viz. :

“Quest. *Who are the persons that exercise the episcopal office in the Methodist Church in Europe and America?*

“Ans. *John Wesley, Thomas Coke, Francis Asbury.*”

My appointment was Caswell circuit. At the close of conference, I set out for my field of labour, poorly clad and nearly penniless, but happy in God. In the Holston country there was but little money, and clothing was very dear. My coat was worn through at the elbows; and I had not a whole under garment left; and as for boots, I had none. But my health was good, and I was finely mounted. I could have sold my horse for sufficient to purchase another to answer my purpose, and clothe myself decently; but he had borne me safely through so many dangers, and once, at least, by his instinctive sagacity, rescued me from perishing, that I had resolved that nothing but death should separate us. This, however, soon occurred; for in a few days this noble animal, my sole property in the world at that time, sickened and died. So there I was, an entire stranger,

several hundred miles from home, without horse, decent clothing, or funds. But I was not without friends. The good brother with whom I stayed gave me a horse for four weeks on trial; and I determined to go to Newbern, and try my credit for clothing.

On my way I called at the house of a gentleman by the name of Howe, who, though not a Methodist, was friendly. His inquiries about the western country led to a development of my destitute condition, with which I saw he was touched. He pressed me to spend a few days with him; but I told him time was a talent with which God had intrusted me, and it was all I could call my own, and I must hasten on to my work. Earthly treasures I had none, and had abandoned all means of acquiring them. But a heavenly inheritance I hoped, with increasing zeal and activity, to seek throughout my life. I then informed him of my business to Newbern, where I knew no person. After I had mounted and left this gentleman, he called me back, saying he had a store in Newbern, and wished me to hand a letter which he gave me to his clerk. Little did I think, at the time, that it contained directions to his clerk to let me have what I might want out of the store to the amount of twenty-five dollars, for

which he would never afterward allow me to pay him a single cent. Thus did the Lord provide!

Soon after commencing my labours in North Carolina, I visited a pleasant settlement consisting almost exclusively of Episcopalians. In the time of the revolutionary war, their ministers had left them, and they had long been without the form of religion among them. At their request, I went to preach to them, and baptize their children; and I found them ripe for the gospel.

The sight of so many children, brought to be dedicated to God in baptism, for there were scores of them, deeply interested me. I addressed the parents, who were much affected, and their cries so increased my sensibility that, for a time, my power of speech was wholly suspended. I could not, by any exertion I could make, articulate the name of the child. This was observed, and occasioned great excitement of feeling among the people. But when I had so recovered as to be able to proceed, many were melted into tears.

After the meeting was concluded, many followed me to the house where I went to lodge. At night, although no appointment had been given out, the house was filled with people, and I could not decline preaching to

them.\* In the midst of my discourse, the mother of the family got down upon her knees; and such was her state of feeling that, in that attitude, she made her way to the table, where I was standing, and begged me to pray for her. In a few moments the whole congregation was in commotion. I was alone, much exhausted, and unskilled in the management of such a work. I, however, continued to pray and exhort till midnight. The work advanced; and in six weeks we had a society in this place of eighty members, mostly heads of families. This event I have always deemed a divine sanction of infant baptism. If I ever witnessed a work of God among any people, I witnessed it here; and this work evidently commenced with the baptizing of infant children.

My second year in this section was on a district, consisting of eight circuits, embracing a part of Virginia. At one of our quarterly meetings on New River, a religious concern was waked up in many, which pervaded a large district of country, and suspended for many weeks almost all worldly concerns. In one family, where I passed many happy days, there were thirty who claimed to be born again, twelve of whom were whites, the fruits of that meeting. This

was the family of General Bryan, who was a barrister at law, and, previous to the meeting, a professed deist. His lady had watched a favourable opportunity, and had obtained a promise from the general to attend her to the expected quarterly meeting. When the day arrived, the coach was in readiness to convey Mrs. Bryan to the meeting, and servants to attend her, but the general declined going himself. This was a disappointment that went to the heart, for she had said she would not go without him. After a little pause, she stepped to the door and ordered the coach to be put up, and then, with a forced smile, said, "I must forgive you, general, this ungentlemanly act, as it is the first I have had to complain of. If you, sir, can lightly get over your pledge, I cannot get over mine. I have said I would not go without you;" adding, "If my husband was a Christian, I should be one of the happiest of women." She then burst into tears, and was about to leave the room, when the general caught her in his arms, and said, "I cannot resist the eloquence of tears; dry them up, and I will go."

On Sunday morning the general and his lady were seated again in the congregation. Preaching, with short intervals, continued for several hours, and the whole assembly



were, from time to time, bowed down like the slender reed before the passing breeze ; but none of them as yet lost their elasticity. Many hearts seemed bruised, but none broken. The last that spoke melted his auditors on these affecting words, namely, "*Which none of the princes of this world knew, for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.*" Under this discourse General Bryan was seen to weep, and when the collection was made many wondered much to see him volunteer in making it, at the close of which he asked the privilege of addressing the people, and, having mounted the stand, spoke nearly in the following strain :—

"Fellow-citizens,—I have sometimes trembled before the majesty of courts. But where am I now? and what? An advocate? Yes! Before a judge weak and erring like myself? No, but before the Judge eternal! To plead the cause of truth against myself, and against many of you, who, like myself, have crucified the Lord of glory! Had I known it, I would not have done so wickedly, nor would you, nor you," pointing to two of his deistical fraternity. "You see my tears; they are tears of penitential grief, for myself and for you, for we have denied the Lord that bought us with his own blood.



“Ye dear heralds of the gospel! I am an advocate for Christ. You have convinced me. You say, when the Eternal would save the world, he chose a way known only to himself. None of the princes of this world knew it, and they could not until it was told them, and then they would not believe! So neither would I until you melted me into the belief. Some may doubt it, but I know God has sent you, and your God and people shall be mine.”

During this speech, the people were silent as death, save now and then a sob or shriek; but now a loud cry arose, and continued with many until the going down of the sun; and the slain of the Lord were many.

General Bryan lived, I think, not quite two years after this happy change; but he lived truly an advocate for Christ, and died happy, lifting his arm in token of victory when his tongue failed to articulate words.

During my labours on this district, I formed an acquaintance with some of the most devoted, holy, zealous, and faithful people I ever knew. Some of them had been called to pass through fiery trials; and their steadfastness was proverbial. A sister Jones, of Mecklenburg, was a remarkable instance of this. She was a person of superior gifts as well as

grace ; and her courage and perseverance in the service of the Lord constrained all who knew her to acknowledge her deep sincerity.

Her husband cherished the most bitter and inveterate prejudice against the Methodists ; and, being naturally a man of violent passions and a most ungovernable temper, he, by his threats, deterred her, for a time, from joining them. Nor did he stop here, but positively forbade her going to hear them. Soon after this, Mr. Easter, a man remarkably owned of God, and a favourite preacher of Mrs. Jones, was to preach in the neighbourhood. Mrs. Jones told her husband she believed it to be a duty which she owed to God and herself to go and hear Mr. Easter, and begged his permission. But he refused. She then said, she should be compelled, from a sense of obligation to a higher power, to disobey his command. At this, he became enraged, and, in his fury, swore, if she did, he would charge his gun and shoot her when she returned. But this tremendous threat did not deter her. During preaching she was remarkably blessed and strengthened ; and, on her return, met her infuriated husband at the door, with his gun in his hand. She accosted him mildly, and said, " My dear, if you take my life, you must obtain leave of my heavenly

Spouse ;" and, thus saying, approached him and took the deadly weapon out of his hand, without meeting with any resistance.

This virulent temper God in due time softened and subdued, so that the tiger became a lamb. When on my way to my first quarterly meeting in Mecklenburg in this district, I called on Mr. Jones, and had the whole history of this transaction from the parties themselves, who, now united with one heart in the service of God, accompanied me to the meeting.

On Saturday many people attended, and great power was manifested during the public exercises. On Sunday morning the love-feast was appointed to commence at eight o'clock. By seven the house was nearly full, and many were prostrate on the floor ; and the surrounding grove was made vocal by the shouts of men, women, and children, as they were approaching the house, some of whom were supported on their horses by those who accompanied them. When the house was filled, those who could not get in were engaged in some religious exercise without, and numbers were slain under the trees. A son of Col. Taylor, of Tar River, supported by two men, went about among the people, praising God, and telling them what the Lord

had done for his soul ; and wherever he came they were melted into tears. His appearance was sufficient to disarm the most stout-hearted of them. As to preaching, it was out of the question. Nor did there appear to be any need of it ; for all seemed to yield to the gracious influence, and with melting hearts to say, " This is the work of God."

Something like this had been witnessed under the ministry of Mr. Boardman, King, and others ; but Mr. Rankin, Mr. Wesley's general assistant, so violently opposed it that it soon declined. This circumstance was remembered ; and all who were the real friends of experimental religion agreed that it behooved us to let the Lord work in his own way.

A little before I was called to bid a final adieu to North Carolina, I was, by indisposition, confined at the house of a very aged couple, who had no children. They had lived in good repute as Christians, and deemed themselves such, until the baptizing in the woods. On that memorable day they were brought to see themselves sinners, without God and without any well-grounded hope. They were the first who offered themselves for membership among us ; and they continued to adorn their profession by well-ordered lives.

They had given me many demonstrations of their affectionate regard for me ; but until this visit I had not known the extent of it. Being in possession of a farm and mill, with other property, and advanced in life, they desired me to write their will. I objected on the ground of not understanding the form which might be requisite. They said their will was simple, and might be easily drawn ; it was, that, on condition of my remaining with them through their short stay in this world, all they had should be mine. This presented a strong inducement to exchange a life of poverty and toil for one of affluence and ease. Had I accepted the offer, my history would doubtless have been very different from what it is. But I could not do it with a good conscience ; so I bid them and North Carolina adieu for ever, and returned to see my friends in New-Jersey.

## CHAPTER XI.

Mr. Ware arrives in time to attend the conference at Philadelphia—Is appointed to Wilmington, in Delaware—Reflections upon the dealings of God with the church since its organization—The prosperity of the work—The character of the preachers—The doubts among the preachers—Locations and causes of them—The effect of frequent locations upon the general work—General council—Barely tried and abandoned—Success in ministerial labours—Manner of conducting them—Sabbath schools—Difficulties to encounter in Wilmington—Preference for the back woods.

HAVING spent two years very pleasantly in this country, and witnessed many signal manifestations of the power and grace of God, I set out for the north. During my six years' absence I had no passionate longings for home; but when I commenced my journey with a view of visiting it, the attraction, like that of a loadstone, drew me lightly over the vast tract of country which separated me from it; and I was sometimes led to exclaim, "O that I had wings!"

I arrived in time to attend the Philadelphia conference for 1791, and was appointed to Wilmington, in the state of Delaware.

At this point it is natural for me to pause, and review the past—the spiritual warfare in which we have been engaged as a body of



Christian ministers. Seven years I have been engaged in this cause. Great and signal has been our harmony and success. In many matters there may have been slight differences; but in every thing essential we were one; and believing the doctrines of a free and full salvation, and that God raised up the Methodists to spread, by means of these doctrines, evangelical holiness through the land, we were one and all for active war. During our seven years' conflict with the powers of darkness, we had received an accession of sixty-seven travelling preachers, and sixty-four thousand thirty-nine members; fifty-one thousand one hundred and fifty-five whites, and twelve thousand eight hundred and eighty-four coloured.

I have given some account of the character and progress of the work in Maryland, New-Jersey, Long Island, Tennessee, and North Carolina, where I was called to bear an humble part in it; but in truth in almost every part of the United States the enemies of the Lord were overcome by thousands; for the work was of God, and who can contend with the King of kings, while the instruments he has chosen to carry on his work are faithful?

Since the Christmas conference, we have lost, by death and location, many skilful

warriors in this holy cause. The first that fell in the field was Pedicord, emphatically the man of feeling. The next was the grave, undaunted Mair, who was invincible to every thing but truth. Then the dove-like Lambert and the blameless Thomas. All these in two years, 1785 and 1786. The third year we lost none who were in full membership or had a seat in conference when the church was organized; and it is of those only that I speak. There were many local preachers who were both talented and eminently useful; but I had no personal knowledge of the larger proportion of them.

In 1788 we lost four by death, and two by what was worse than death. These two, whose manner of leaving the work it is painful to record, were men who stood high in rank and gifts. "What," said one, "shall sing the dirge or perform the obsequies of a soul intombed?" I would say, "of a preacher lost!" The four who died in the work were burning and shining lights. I knew them all personally, except one. Curtis and Major were adorned with artless simplicity, and armed with the irresistible eloquence of tears. But which, on the whole, was pre-eminent, it is difficult to tell until the trophies they won shall be numbered in the great day.

People love the preacher who makes them feel. Hence there were many even among the unconverted who could not bear to hear a whisper against either of these sons of consolation. They would have risked their lives to rescue them from insult or injury. I have seen an audience sit quietly and listen to a masterly discourse, without a tear to moisten the eye of an individual; and then Major, by an exhortation of five minutes, produce such an effect that all seemed to melt before him, so that there was scarcely a dry eye in the whole assembly. I once heard this good man, when the Methodists principally for forty miles around, and some for more than fifty, were collected at a quarterly meeting, on the favoured peninsula. His text was, "Unto you who believe he is precious;" and before he closed his pathetic discourse his voice was lost in the cries of the people; and at the close of the meeting we had occasion to rejoice over many sons and daughters, redeemed by power as well as by price.

Woolman Hickson, distinguished by his thirst for knowledge, both human and divine, travelled our circuit soon after I became a Methodist; and from his excellent example I profited much. Few men among us ever observed with greater exactness "the rules of a

preacher," especially these:—"Be diligent. Never be unemployed. Never be triflingly employed. Be serious. Let your motto be, Holiness unto the Lord. Avoid all lightness, jesting, and foolish talking." Having a strong and discriminating mind, by his diligence and application according to these rules, he could not but make proficiency both in gifts and grace. But his physical powers were feeble; and nothing but a miracle, with the exertion he made, could save him from an early grave. Accordingly the term of his labours was short. But to such a man as Hickson it must be "gain" to "die."

We lost a number also by location, and some of them eminently distinguished for their talents, experience, and usefulness.

The first on this list, after the organization of the church in 1784, was Samuel Row. He had travelled five years. Three desisted from travelling in 1785; but Row was the most conspicuous of the number. He was, while with us, a man of amiable and dignified manners, both as a Christian and a minister. He had the most tenacious and retentive memory of any man I ever knew; and the use he had made of this noble faculty evinced that the bent of his youthful mind had been toward piety. He thought, as he used

sometimes to say, if the Bible were lost, he could replace by his memory the four Evangelists, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistle to the Romans, and the greater part of the Epistle to the Hebrews. He was a great admirer of Young's Night Thoughts, and never did I hear any person repeat them with such effect. He was much admired by many as a preacher; but some believed he dealt too much in flowers and in other men's thoughts.

Caleb Boyer and Ignatius Pigman, who commenced travelling in 1780, located in 1788. These were reckoned among the first preachers. They were esteemed men of superior claims; and it is presumed that there have been few in any age or country who could extemporize with either of these primitive Methodist missionaries. Be that as it may, in preaching, Boyer was the Paul, and Pigman the Apollos, of the Methodist connection at that time. When Whatcoat and Vasey heard them at the Christmas conference, they said they had not heard their equal in the British connection, except Wesley and Fletcher. These men, who copied with great fidelity and exactness the example of humility and self-devotion set by the apostle of the Gentiles, were held in high estimation by the Methodists of 1788. It was accordingly

a matter of much grief to them when they abandoned the itinerant ranks.

The sentiment, at this period of our history, was prevalent, that those preachers who had been called, by the grace and providence of God, into the itinerancy, could not, innocently, abandon it unless in case of bodily disability. It would have been well for the people if they had understood their duty to their preachers as well as they professed to understand the preachers' duty to the church and their God. Some, indeed, did ; but had all felt the force of the obligation on themselves to render the preachers a comfortable support, as they saw the duty of the preachers to be faithful in their work, with the few we had at that time, none of their families would have been allowed to suffer.

With the small amount allowed by Discipline, some could not economize to support their families. To retain such preachers in the travelling connection, provision was made to allow those who had children, sixteen dollars for every one under six years of age, and twenty-one dollars and thirty-three cents for every one between six and eleven. With this provision, however, many of our people were dissatisfied, and, in 1787, it was rescinded. When this was done, Boyer and Pigman



thought it their duty to locate. But in this I have always thought they erred. Had they continued, with unabating zeal, in the work of God, he would have given them friends, and they and their families would have suffered as little, perhaps, as they were destined to in a local capacity. They had been too long abstracted from the business of the world to return to it with encouragement to prosecute it with safety and success.

Four other preachers of useful talents, namely, S. Dudley, William Cannon, M. Ellis, and Joseph Wyatt, were returned as having a partial location. These excellent men had laboured successfully, and suffered much, in the blessed cause; and they never should have been permitted to locate for want of the small means required to support their families, while they would have been content with such support. But the day of missionary zeal had only begun to dawn upon the people, while, with the preachers, the sun was up and at its zenith—for there has been no day since as dark and tempestuous to them as that which had now gone by.

All did not locate, however, on account of their families. Some were broken down with labour, and should have been placed upon the supernumerary list. But, at that time, we had

none, nor until 1791, when I proposed that Henry Willis should stand in that relation to the conference. Wyatt was among those worn down by labour. Except his want of physical strength, he was little inferior to any among us, and, in purity, perhaps to none. His sermons were short, but composed of the best materials, and delivered in the most pleasing manner. He was, for many years, chaplain to the Maryland legislature.

The vacancies made in the itinerant ranks by locations were soon filled up by young men; and the work of the Lord went on and greatly prospered throughout our borders, so that we became less sensible of the loss of those who had been reduced to the necessity of pursuing some other avocation for the support of their families, and of our obligations to them. Some of them might easily have obtained a good support in other churches; for in however contemptible a light they were held while labouring as Methodist preachers, the moment any of respectable talents proposed leaving and going over to others they were cordially received. But few of the preachers of this period could feel themselves at home anywhere but among the Methodists.

For Mr. Asbury I had the profoundest veneration, and was often touched with the

affection he manifested toward me, notwithstanding that, against some things in which he discovered a deep interest, I continued to cherish an opposite opinion. The first offence against him, of which I was conscious, was my opposing a new plan, proposed by the bishops, to supersede the necessity of a general conference, by instituting a general council, to consist of the bishops and presiding elders. The first plan allowed all the elders to be called ; but the number should not be less than nine. The council should have power to mature every thing, and must be unanimous in recommending ; but nothing should be decisive until approved by the annual conferences.

The loss of time in attending the general conference was great ; to which, if we add the expense and fatigue, we may see the motives that influenced the bishops to propose a council. That these were weighty reasons, none could deny ; and an unwillingness to oppose Bishop Asbury led a majority of the preachers to yield, so far as to permit the experiment to be made. A minority, however, opposed it from the first ; and I happened to be one of that number. I had ventured to say, if there must be a council to consist of bishops and presiding elders, the latter should be chosen, not by the bishops, but by

the conferences, and every thing done in council should be by a simple majority. Much as I respected our superintendents, for one I could not consent to give them a negative on all future proceedings. I was not disposed to charge the projectors of the plan with any other than the purest motives. Others, however, I was persuaded, would do so. And, on the whole, it was better, in my opinion, to abandon the council altogether. He then gave me some severe rebukes; but, nevertheless, appointed me a presiding elder. The experiment of a council was made; but, after its second meeting, it was abandoned for ever.

Eight years had now elapsed since I entered the itinerant field, and I still remained single, and held myself at liberty to go wherever I might be appointed. As Bishop Asbury was never married, he was thought to have a partiality for those preachers who followed his example, and might hold me in some higher estimation on that account. But with those preachers who married prudently, he found no fault. Nor had the preachers' wives cause to complain of any want of attention or kindness toward them from the bishop. On the contrary, he uniformly manifested a paternal tenderness and solicitude for their welfare.

Next to Mr. Wesley, Bishop Asbury was the most unwearied itinerant the world ever saw. No man I ever knew cherished a higher Christian regard for the female character than he; yet, for the sake of the itinerancy, he chose a single life, and was doubtless well pleased with those preachers who, for the same reason, followed his example.

At the close of the several conferences for 1790, we had the satisfaction to find that there had been gathered into the fold more than fourteen thousand, a greater number than had crowned the labours of any preceding year. But there were many lambs of the flock, and the question occurred, "What can be done for these?"

We had made it a point, in visiting families, to attend especially to the children, to converse with them about Jesus, and to impress upon the minds of parents the importance of a religious care for the spiritual health of their offspring. We now resolved, as the heart of one man, to establish Sunday schools. Our impression was, that by these, many, very many, of the rising generation might be secured on the side of virtue and religion. But we erred in confining the benefits of these schools chiefly to the poor, and to the acquisition of human learning. Our suc-

cess was not, therefore, commensurate with our confident expectations.\*

During the year before last, (1789,) Gill left us to sorrow, not on his account, but our own. His death was truly that of a righteous man. After witnessing a good confession, leaning upon the bosom of his God, he closed his own eyes, and sweetly fell asleep. This was characteristic of the man. Was it not saying to spectators, "See how assured I am that all is well?"

And now, 1790, intelligence was brought to the conference that Tunnell also was among the dead, and that he was no less tranquil in his death than in his life. I have said that Jonathan and David were not more ardently attached to each other, than were Tunnell and Gill. What raptures must they have felt at meeting in their Father's house above! Few purer spirits, I verily believe, ever inhabited tenements of clay.

We lost this year, also, by location, three who were members of the Christmas conference. They were all gifted and successful labourers in the Lord's vineyard. Henry Willis, however, stood pre-eminent. I knew

\* Standing where I now do, and looking back on the last forty years, I wonder that we did not see at once the necessity of forming a Sunday-school union.



him well. He was a manly genius, and very intelligent. He well understood theology, and was a most excellent man and minister. His life, as a travelling and local preacher, and a supernumerary, was, I believe, unblemished. I followed him to the south as far as North Carolina, to the east as far as New-York, and to the west as far as Holston; and found his name dear to many of the excellent of the earth. His physical powers, however, were not sufficient to sustain the ardour of his mind. But of this he was often wholly unmindful, until his bow nearly lost its elasticity, when a local or supernumerary relation became inevitable.

Thus briefly surveying some of the prominent features of the work during the seven years that were past, I commenced my labours in Wilmington. This was my first station; but I sighed for the back woods, which were a paradise to me, compared with this suffocating borough, infected with a mystical miasm, on the subject of religion, which had a deleterious effect on many, and especially on the youth. They had imbibed this moral poison until it broke out in supercilious contempt of all who were by one class denounced as hirelings and will-worshippers, and by another as free-willers and perfection-

ists. Hence the house in which we worshipped was surrounded by hundreds of those sons of Belial night after night, while there were scarcely fifty within; and such were their character and conduct that females were afraid to attend our meeting at night, and we had no alternative but to commence service in time to dismiss the congregation before dark. Gladly would I have exchanged this, my first station, for the western woods. I had, however, the pleasure of numbering among those of my charge some of the excellent of the earth, and much satisfaction in marking their growth in grace.

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## CHAPTER XII.

In 1792 Mr. Ware is appointed to Staten Island, in the state of New-York—Remains on this circuit but a short time—Is appointed to the Susquehanna district—Extent of his district—Moral destitution of the people in the remote parts of his district—Anecdote of a young man pretending to be a preacher—Interview with a minister of the Reformed Dutch Church—Ignorance of the people of his charge on the subject of religion—Introduction of Methodist preaching into his neighbourhood—The effect of it.

IN the spring of 1792, I was appointed to Staten Island, where I laboured a short time with much satisfaction and some success; and then took charge of the Susquehanna

district. From this time to 1808, I continued to fill this very laborious office, which was, I believe, a longer time in regular succession than had fallen to the lot of any other man since we became a church.

My district embraced only six circuits; but between two of them, Flanders and Wyoming, the way on the Susquehanna was dreary enough; and from thence to Tioga, all but impassable, especially in winter. The first time I attempted this tour in the winter, when I came to the mountain through which the river passes, the road being full of ice, it was impossible to keep it; so I had no alternative but to turn back and take the ice in the river. I was afterward told that it was believed no person had ever passed the dangerous defile in this way before. In several places there were chasms in the ice of several feet in width running nearly across the river, occasioned by the water's falling until the ice, resting upon the ridges of rocks underneath, was broken. Over these my horse had to leap. But a greater danger arose from the wearing of the ice by the current below, so that in some places it was plainly to be seen. Protected by a kind Providence, however, I passed safely through.

At this time none seemed to care for these

poor people in the wilderness, except the Methodists. One man, indeed, did visit Tioga, who pretended to instruct the people on the subject of religion, though not much to their benefit. After hearing the preacher who laboured in that part, he rose up and told the people he had some objections to the doctrine they had heard. That doctrine to which he was particularly opposed was, the possibility of final apostacy, or falling from grace. He said he perceived the preacher did not understand the original, or he would not have quoted and applied Scripture as he did ; and he recited several passages which he had quoted, stating how they read in the original Greek. When he was done, the preacher, who was familiar with the low Dutch, replied that the gentleman had made a small mistake, for it was not Greek, but low Dutch, in which he had been speaking. "No," replied one, "it is no mistake, but a contemptible imposition ; for I understand the Greek, and the fellow has not uttered one word in that language." He called himself a Baptist preacher, but was doubtless an impostor.

At this time we had much to contend with from the opposition which prejudice had every where raised against us and our doctrines. The following is an example of it. While

travelling on this district, I one day fell in with a minister of the Reformed Dutch Church by the name of Bencoter.\* I was passing a public house where he was, on my way to Wyoming; and he mounted his horse and overtook me. On coming up he inquired if I was not a missionary. I replied that I was a Methodist, and we were all missionaries. Observing that he was surveying me very closely, I said, "I presume, sir, you have not much knowledge of the Methodists." He replied, "I know enough of them to know that they hold egregious errors." "Do they, indeed," said I, "then they are greatly to be pitied." He replied, with much sternness, "They are greatly to be blamed; for if I am rightly informed, and I believe I am, they are not only unlearned men, but despise learning, and are altogether incompetent to teach men the science of salvation." "In one thing, sir," said I, "you are misinformed. We do not despise learning; on the contrary we hold it to be desirable. But we do not deem it an essential qualification of a gospel minister. Grace, rather than human learning, qualifies a man to preach. St. Paul was one of the most learned men of his day; and he acknow-

\* Van Benschoten, probably, contracted by common use into Bencoter.—EDITOR.

ledged that his qualifications to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ were the gift of God. But, sir, as you have the advantages of age and education, and I am comparatively young, and make no pretensions to classical learning, be so good as to point out to me my errors." "You," said he, "have embraced the creed of Arminius, with the addition of the blasphemous article of falling from grace. This I hold to be the quintessence of error." I replied that we did hold it *possible* for a regenerated person to fall away and perish; and that we thought ourselves supported in this opinion by the Scriptures, to the testimony of which we were willing to appeal; but as this could not be conveniently done on the road, I should be pleased to hear from him on what he founded his views of the impeccability of the saints. "On what I found it!" said he, "why, on the unchangeableness of God." "Do I understand you, Mr. B.," said I, "to affirm that such is the unchangeableness of God, that his love, once placed on a creature, can never be detached from that creature, and that to say it can, is the blasphemy with which you charge us?" He said he claimed to be so understood. I then asked him whether, when God made the angels, his love was not placed upon them—whether he



did not love them? "Angels! sir," he replied: "angels never had the promise made to Christians." "That I grant, sir," I said, "but did he not *love* them at all?" "Jesus took not upon him the nature of angels," was the answer. "I know that, sir," I continued, "but did not God *love all the angels* when he called them into being? You say the love of God can never be detached from a being on which it is once placed; and I wish to know if the love of God was not once placed on those who are now in chains under darkness, reserved unto the judgment of the great day?" "You are a bold, adventurous young man," said the old gentleman, "and doubtless think you have placed me in a dilemma out of which I cannot extricate myself." I told him if he did not feel that he was in a dilemma, I thought he would not hesitate to answer my question, which could be done in a word. "And what," said he, "if I should say he loves them still, as his *creatures*?" "I would ask you," I replied, "to explain to me how God can love devils! Can he love their nature? Surely not. Can he love their persons, and yet hold them in chains under darkness? This is a strange token of his love. If he does still love them, it is a plain dictate of common sense that he will restore them to communion

with himself; and if devils will be restored, doubtless all wicked men will be also, and hell-redemption is true." Here Mr. B. interrupted me, and said with an air of contempt, "I perceive it is useless to converse with a man who cannot draw a just conclusion from self-evident premises." So we parted. Mr. B. did me great honour by warning the people against me, as one who would, if it were possible, deceive the very elect. Mr. B.'s parish was very much secluded from the surrounding settlements. It was separated from them by mountains which were difficult to pass over; and being the regularly settled minister in that place, which was inhabited almost entirely by Low Dutch people, who have always been proverbial for the deference they pay to their ministers, he held an unlimited sway over them in religious matters. And this he seemed determined to improve to his own advantage. But he overdid the matter. The Methodists had been kept out of the valley by the assiduity of the minister and his particular friends, until the following circumstance occurred. Mr. B. was called on by one of his poor parishioners to baptize his child. He however deferred it in a way to satisfy the poor man that it would not be done until the accustomed fee of fifty cents should be paid

him. This gave offence to the person concerned, and he invited a Methodist preacher to preach at his house and baptize his child. This sorely afflicted Mr. B., especially as it soon became evident to him that the people did not consider these preachers altogether so incompetent as he had represented them to be, or at least that they could understand them, and many closed in with their doctrine. And his disquietude on account of the introduction of the dreadful heresy of Methodism, as he had been in the habit of calling it, into his parish, was by no means lessened when some of his people told him plainly, that if what he had so long preached to them were true, they stood as good a chance to be saved among the Methodists as any where else. Having said so much about the ignorance of the Methodist preachers, and their incompetency to instruct the people in the doctrines of divine revelation, when they had obtained a footing in the valley, Mr. B. seemed to consider it necessary to become a little more active in instructing his own flock. Indeed, there was need enough that something should be done to instruct the inhabitants of this valley. I passed through it every quarter, on my way to Wyoming, and had an opportunity of knowing something respecting them; and

I verily believe I never knew a people more grossly ignorant in matters of religion than many of them were. Mr. B., in adopting measures to instruct his parishioners, established something like a Bible-class, in which adults as well as children were admitted; and it was told me as a fact by one whose veracity I had no reason to suspect, that when he asked an elderly woman in the class who was the oldest man, she replied that she did not know, but she believed in her soul it must be old Hans Brooks. Such had been the benefits the people had received from being trained up under the man who claimed to be a competent religious instructor, and who had liberally denounced the Methodist preachers as incompetent. But the people would judge for themselves. And Methodist preaching, after it obtained an introduction into the place, was listened to by many with respect and profit, and has been productive of great good to that secluded people.

## CHAPTER XIII.

In the spring of 1793 Mr. Ware takes charge of the Albany district—Account of an impostor assuming his name—His detection and exposure—State of the country in many parts of the district—Pecuniary sufferings of some of the preachers—Success of the work—Revival commenced through the instrumentality of a woman—Opposition from the established denominations—How met and managed—Account of the introduction of Methodism into New-England by Rev. Jesse Lee—Some of the first preachers in this work—Hope Hull—Daniel Smith—The effect of their labours—Annoyances to the preachers by the practice of attacking them on the subject of doctrine, after preaching—The preachers in the district innocent, unassuming men—Thoughts on the subject of providing for the comfortable support of the preachers, especially when superannuated, and thereby preventing so frequent locations.

IN the spring of 1793 I took charge of the Albany district. This district was constituted of ten circuits, and embraced a portion of four states, namely, New-York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Vermont.

Soon after I got within the bounds of the district, I met on the road one of the preachers who had not attended the conference; and although he had never seen me before, he introduced himself as if he had been acquainted with me. On my informing him where his appointment was, he said, with tears in his eyes, "My dear brother, I cannot go. I have paid all the little demands against

me, and am now left penniless." I replied, "Cheer up, my brother, here are six dollars, for which I will never ask you. They will bear your expenses to your circuit." He took them, and I saw him no more.

When I came to Albany, I found there a preacher who had not attended the conference, and whom I had never before seen. When I told him my name, and that I was the successor of Mr. Garrettson on their district, he seemed embarrassed. After a while he said, "It will not, I presume, offend you, if I give you my reasons for requesting to see your credentials. About this time last year a man came to this place, and told us that his name was Thomas Ware—that Bishop Asbury had sent him on from the south with directions to report himself to Jesse Lee, and that on his way he had lost his horse, and had been advised to come to Albany, presuming that he might find Mr. Garrettson there, who, he had been told, would help him on to Mr. Lee. By walking, he said, and carrying his bundle, he had overheated himself and taken a violent cold, so that his voice had been for some time quite gone, and he was still unable to preach, or even pray in family devotion. Your name we had often seen in the Minutes; and as his appearance was decent, we were too



delicate and tender of his feelings to ask him for his credentials. We accordingly assisted him by making some collection for him, and then directed him to Mr. Garrettson. In a few days after he departed I became uneasy, and set out in pursuit of him; and on my arrival at Rhinebeck, ascertained that he had been there, and they had made a collection for him. But he had left that for some other place."

When he was done, I told him that I had heard of this impostor before. He went on for a while without being detected. But on one occasion he met a preacher on the road who knew me, and reported himself to him, assuming my name. The preacher immediately challenged him as an impostor, and threatened on arriving at the next town to have him arrested. He was well mounted, and, on hearing this threat, put whip to his horse. Brother Merrick, the preacher who detected him, pursued him for some time, but finally gave over the chase, and he was heard of no more.

My venerable predecessor, the Rev. Freeborn Garrettson, had greatly interested himself for Albany, which is the metropolis of the state of New-York, and had succeeded in erecting a small church there. But the time

of much fruit was not yet. My district was immensely large, and the country principally new. Accommodations for the preachers were, for the more part, poor; and the means of their support exceedingly limited. While passing through one of the circuits, soon after I came on the district, I called at the preacher's house. He happened at that time to be at home. It was near noon, and I of course must dine with him. He had a wife and seven children; and our bill of fare was one blackberry pie, with rye crust, without either butter or lard to shorten it. After we had dined, when I was about to depart, I put a few dollars into the hands of this poor brother, who, on receiving them, sat down and wept so heartily that I could not avoid weeping with him.

The Lord was with us in a very glorious manner, at some of our quarterly meetings, during the first quarter; and there appeared to be a general expectation that he would do still greater things for us throughout the vast field we had to cultivate. Here, as in Tennessee, there were multitudes of people wholly destitute of the gospel, until it was brought to them by the Methodists. The means of their introduction into different places were various; but always such as evidently indicated

that the finger of God was in it. In one remote settlement there were about twenty families, who, to use the language of the messenger that invited us to preach to them, had been destitute of both law and gospel. "We had," said he, "a number of us lived like atheists, until last spring. Then there came a few families in among us, and with them an old lady who had heard the Methodists preach, and often told us that they would come and preach for us if they were invited. We had not, as yet, any civil officers; and to most of us all days were alike. At length this woman persuaded a number of her friends to meet at her house, telling them that a young man who could read well would read the Scriptures or some good book for them, and they would sing hymns together, &c., for she said it was a shame for us to live so much like heathens. This was done on the sabbath; and at the close of the first meeting, they agreed to assemble again on the next sabbath. When the time came, almost all the people in the settlement were present. This so alarmed the young man that he refused to read; nor could any other person be persuaded to read, or give out a hymn. At length the woman, at whose house they were assembled, began to weep, and many, moved by feelings

of sympathy, wept with her. She then fell on her knees, and cried to the Lord to have mercy on her and her neighbours; and soon almost all in the house were on their knees crying aloud, 'Save, Lord, or we perish.' Thus they continued to call upon the Lord until he came to the relief of some of them, and turned their mourning into joy."

This, the man said, was one of the most affecting scenes he ever witnessed. "Since that memorable day," added he, "we have spent much of our time together in reading the Bible and prayer. We wish to be united in Christian fellowship, and have the ordinances of the Lord administered among us." A preacher was accordingly sent to them.

In Granville and Pittsfield, the current of opposition was very strong against us. In these parts religious societies were systematically organized, and sustained by law. With churches in the centre of their towns and parishes, they prided themselves on having a learned, competent ministry, whom, they supported by a tax upon the people. But with all their boast of learning and competency, I found many of the clergy in these parts so far from being really great men, that I soon lost all fear of them.

The preacher on the Pittsfield circuit called,

on his way to an appointment, at a public house to feed his horse. The inn-keeper, perceiving that he was a Methodist preacher, said to him, "How is it that you Methodists skulk into the dark corners and retired places to preach, and do not show yourselves in our towns and principal places, that we may hear you and judge for ourselves?" The preacher replied, "You are so priest-ridden that none of you dare to open your doors to us." "Well," said the man, "you shall not have that to say again. Tell me when you will preach here, and if the meeting-house cannot be had, you shall preach in my parlour." So the arrangement was made for an appointment, and the meeting-house opened. At the close of the sermon, the preacher said that, with permission, he would give out an appointment for the presiding elder to preach there, when, he presumed, he would dwell on the peculiarities of Methodism, and then they could hear and judge for themselves. The preacher, having made the appointment, met me and gave me information of what he had done; but I was far from being pleased.

When the time arrived, we found the house well filled, and the minister of the parish present; and it was quite apparent that much interest was felt by the people.

Under these circumstances it seemed necessary, as in those times Methodist preachers, in going into new places, generally found it, to suit the discourse to the occasion, and not disappoint the expectation of the people. I had learned the state of public opinion, or at least the views of those who were attached to the standing order, as the Congregationalists in New-England were called, respecting us and our preaching. But a short time before this meeting, I had a conversation with a deacon, or principal officer of the church, who expressed himself without any apparent disguise or restriction on this subject. "My advice to you, sir," said he, "and to your itinerant brethren, is, to go home; or, at least, to desist from disturbing the order of things among us. We want none of your instruction; and, indeed, *you* are not competent to instruct *us*. You make the people commit sin in the loss of so much precious time as is wasted in attending your meetings on week days when they ought to be at labour; or, on the sabbath, in leaving the places where they ought to worship to run after you. We have learned and able ministers, and all the necessary means of grace among us, and we do very well without you. Why, then, do you trouble yourselves about us?"



Such views, I ascertained, pretty generally prevailed, and were employed, with a constant cry of heresy, &c., to prejudice the public mind against us. I accordingly endeavoured to suit my remarks to the circumstances of the case; and for this purpose selected the words of our Lord to Martha, Luke x, 41, 42: "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her."

I proceeded to say that the Saviour reprobred with great tenderness the kind-hearted but not altogether faultless Martha, and commended her more devout and amiable sister. "Your attention," said I, "is invited to a consideration of the characters of these two amiable sisters as they are exhibited in the text. We are told by the Evangelist John, that Jesus loved Martha, and her sister Mary, and Lazarus. O happy family! to be beloved by the Saviour of the world, and to enjoy the privilege of entertaining him! Who would not envy the distinction?"

"The two sisters were loved, tenderly loved, by the Saviour, but not equally. Their piety shone with different degrees of lustre. The character of Martha was amiable, but not faultless. She was a great economist, but

not a great Christian. Her love was sincere, but it was mixed too much with worldly prudence. The order of the family concerns must be attended to in accordance with her habits and taste. No matter how great the guest she was entertaining, she and her sister must be excused from spending their time in listening to him while their own concerns called for their attention."

After introducing the subject with some such remarks, I stated what the deacon above alluded to had said to me, and proceeded:—

"But Mary was more heavenly-minded. She understood more perfectly the true character of their guest, and the benefit of his instructions, and therefore availed herself of the privilege of listening to him without allowing her mind to be troubled about many things, as was Martha's. For this Martha censured her, and called on the Saviour to bid her attend to her domestic concerns. This was rude in Martha, and merited reproof. It indicated a worldly spirit—a state of feeling unsuited to the occasion. Here Martha seems to reprove her Lord for allowing Mary to sit at his feet and listen to his word, and to rebuke her sister for doing so, while she thinks she ought to be engaged in her ordinary business. But the Saviour tenderly chides

her, 'Martha, Martha, thou art careful, and troubled about many things.' This feeling allusion to her worldly-mindedness, her anxious care and trouble about many things at a time when the subject of her soul's salvation should engross all her thoughts, followed by an unqualified commendation of Mary's conduct in choosing the good part, must have made a deep impression on her heart. Was it not a spirit similar to that manifested by Martha which influenced the person I have mentioned to charge us with causing people to sin, by calling them from their worldly business for an hour or two to listen to the gospel of the Son of God? One thing is needful! Doubtless our Lord meant religion—the religion of the heart—a perfection in the Christian graces."

I then took occasion to show in what Christian perfection, as believed by the Methodists, consists, and how it must be obtained; that the soul, to be saved, must, according to the teaching of Christ and his apostles, be quickened, regenerated, and sanctified; and that, being sanctified, it was raised above the influence of those worldly passions and feelings which seemed so much to trouble Martha. This one thing is needful—essentially so—in the estimation of Him who cannot err. Other

things may be desirable ; as health, reputation, friends, competency, &c. But they are not essential to the salvation of the soul. Their absence may occasion suffering for a season, which, however, may be compensated in another world. But what will compensate a man for the loss of his soul? Mary *chose* this better part. It became hers, not of necessity, but by choice."

Here I took occasion to explain and defend the doctrines of Methodism respecting the universality of the atonement, the free offer of salvation to all men, and those other points by which they are contradistinguished from Calvinism, the creed professed by the standing order in that section. Thus, with more than ordinary liberty and freedom of speech, I went through with a discourse which may be regarded as a sample of the manner by which Methodist preachers had to introduce themselves among the people of the New-England states in those early days.

After I closed, the preacher who was with me in the pulpit stated that if any one wished to remark upon the doctrine advanced in the discourse, or to make any observations, there was an opportunity to do so. But no one signified a wish to speak, so he concluded the meeting. The good natured inn-keeper invi-

ted us home with him, in company with the minister of the parish. He treated us very politely, but said not a word about the discourse.

Methodism was at this time a new thing in the land of the pilgrims. It had indeed but lately been introduced. In 1787, when I left Long Island for the west, it had not yet found its way into the New-England states; and it was doubted by some whether it could live in that frigid zone. But Jesse Lee, who has been styled the apostle of New-England, was persuaded that it could live where man could live, and therefore, in 1789, offered himself as a missionary for that field, and was appointed to it.

All who knew Mr. Lee will agree that he was peculiarly fitted for that work. He possessed uncommon colloquial powers and a fascinating address, calculated in a high degree to prepossess the mind in his favour. His readiness at repartee was scarcely equalled; and by the skilful use of this talent he often taught those disposed to be witty with him at his expense, that the safest way to deal with him was to be civil. But what was of more importance, he was fired with a missionary zeal. The truth which had made him free he wished to proclaim to

others, and especially to the inquisitive and enterprising descendants of the pilgrims. He did not doubt but that it would make its way into that land of priests, and open a wide field for action and usefulness. He was, moreover, a man of great moral courage, and more than ordinary preaching talents. He preached with more ease than any other man I ever knew, and was, I think, the best every-day preacher in the connection. Such was the man who, but four years before I came into this district, first lifted the standard of Methodism in the New-England states. He commenced his labours in Norwalk, Connecticut, and progressed onward to the east, taking New-Haven and Boston in his course. At first he was obliged to preach in the open air, not being able to procure a house for that purpose. "When he stood up in the open air," said a person who was present, "and began to sing, I knew not what it meant. I however drew near to listen, and thought the prayer was the best I had ever heard. He then read his text, and began, in a sententious manner, to address his remarks to the understanding and consciences of the people; and I thought all who were present must be constrained to say, 'It is good for us to be here.' All the while the people were gathering he



continued this mode of address, and presented us with such a variety of beautiful images, that I thought he must have been at infinite pains to crowd so many pretty things into his memory. But when he entered upon the subject matter of his text, it was with such an easy, natural flow of expression, and in such a tone of voice, that I could not refrain from weeping; and many others were affected in the same way. When he was done, and we had an opportunity of expressing our views to each other, it was agreed that such a man had not visited New-England since the days of Whitefield. I heard him again, and thought I could follow him to the ends of the earth." During the four years which had elapsed from the time that Mr. Lee first preached in this country to that of my coming on to this district, a number of eminent men had been employed in this section of the work, whose memory was precious to many that had been profited by their ministry. Among these, Hope Hull and Daniel Smith were often spoken of in terms of great respect and tenderness. Scarcely two other men could have been found so well calculated to second the efforts of Mr. Lee in the eastern states. I knew Mr. Hull, and almost envied him his talents. I thought, indeed, if I possessed his

qualifications I could be instrumental in saving thousands, where, with my own, I could gain one. This extraordinary young man drew multitudes after him, who, disarmed of their prejudices, were, under the influence of his discourses, like clay in the hand of the potter. It seemed that he could do with them just as he pleased. And yet in the midst of this astonishing influence and career of usefulness, he sighed for a southern clime; and at his own request he was permitted to retire to another portion of the field. Perhaps it was best, lest, if he had remained, he might have been idolized by the devoted people among whom he laboured, to his own injury and theirs.

A man of some distinction represented him to a skilful musician, who could excite any passion he pleased. "In our part," said he, in speaking of Mr. Hull, "Arminians were deemed guilty of abominable heresy, and our minister had often denounced them, and consigned them to certain perdition. But Mr. Hull came to a neighbouring town, and an influential individual invited him to ours, and informed our minister that, if he refused him the meeting-house, he should preach in his house. The meeting-house was opened, and it was crowded to overflowing. Our minister

was present, and was the first who began to weep. "My eyes," said the man, "were alternately on the minister in the pulpit and the one in the pew; and I was surprised to see how soon and how completely the latter was unmanned. Mr. Hull, it is true, soon left us; but by his unequalled power to move the feelings of the people, he so far secured their attention as to commend to their understanding and hearts the gospel he preached, and Arminians have been permitted to live among us. From that time to the day of his death, our minister was never heard to say a word against them."

The oratory of Daniel Smith was different from that of Hope Hull. It was not calculated to excite violent emotions, but to conciliate and soothe. I recollect to have heard Bishop Asbury say, that D. Smith had a faster hold on the affections of the eastern people, than any other preacher who had ever been sent among them. Such were some of the men who had been instrumental in introducing Methodism into this section; and, every thing considered, they had been remarkably successful in their work. Many were the seals of their ministry. Still the prejudices with which we had to contend were numerous and inveterate.

It was common for the Methodist preachers, when they preached in new places, and often in their regular appointments, to be attacked by some disputant on the subject of doctrines, sometimes by ministers, but more frequently by students in divinity or loquacious and controversial laymen. And, so far as my experience on this district extended, I discovered much rancour and bitterness mingled with these disputes. I am obliged to say that, during the three years of my labours in this section, I found not so much as one friendly clergyman professing the doctrines opposed to Methodism. There may have been such ; but all with whom I conversed, or whose sentiments I knew, were violent in their opposition to us ; and the rough manner in which I was usually treated by them, rendered me unwilling to come in contact with them. But when it so happened that we must try our strength, I found no difficulty in defending the cause I had espoused ; for a foe despised has a great advantage. And when a man has a system which is clearly scriptural, he needs only a little plain common sense and self-possession to maintain his ground, though a host of learned theologians should unite against him.

My district spread over a large territory of

country. At first it embraced, as I have stated, a part of four states; and the last year it extended from Staten Island to Herkimer, more than three hundred miles in length. And here I experienced, for the first time in my life, what Milton meant by "joint racking rheums."

The preachers on the district, both travelling and local, were innocent unassuming men, who cheerfully embraced the happy toil. They were always glad to see me when I came, and especially when they had intelligence to furnish me which they knew would gladden my heart; and, thanks be to God, we had at each visitation some returning prodigals over whom to rejoice together.

It was about this time that my mind became more especially interested in the subject of the support of the ministry. Finding a growing disinclination among the preachers for an itinerant life, which was evinced by their frequent locations, I pondered much on the subject, and wrote to John Dickens, our book agent in Philadelphia, a man of excellent sense and a most amiable spirit. To this good man I could open all my heart, knowing that, if I erred, he would correct me, and do it too in a spirit which would increase my obligations to, and esteem for him.

I thought our system too severe. It called us in youth to sacrifice all means of acquiring property, and threatened to leave us dependant on the cold hand of charity for our bread in old age. Some plead that we had no asylum for our sons, so that, while we were travelling and preaching to others, they had none to take care of them; and they said they must locate to preserve them from ignorance and crime. And the fact that there was no provision made for superannuated men, induced many to forsake the itinerant ranks in order to provide, while they had health and strength, against absolute want in time of infirmity and old age. And who could blame them? To me it appeared in vain that we should ever hope to perpetuate the itinerant plan, unless the wants of the preachers were better supplied, and some security given them that in advanced life, or when their powers should be prostrated, their bread and their water should be sure.

My proposition to my excellent friend, Mr. Dickens, was, to have the Book Concern incorporated, and to hold the proceeds sacred for the superannuated preachers. In this proposition he agreed with me. But in the year 1796 the "Chartered Fund" was instituted, the proceeds of which were to be applied toward



making up the deficiencies of the preachers generally; and thus the superannuated might be said to be placed on the charitable list, where, instead of their annual allowance, they generally received not more than one-third.

This, I believed, would have an injurious effect on the itinerancy, as it would keep the ranks filled with young men. In ten years, reckoning from 1784, we lost, from the travelling connection by locations, two hundred and ninety preachers, among whom were many of long standing, and the most commanding talents.

The Rev. John Dickens, with whom I corresponded on this subject, was not only one of the most sensible men I ever knew, but one of the most conscientious. The subject of ministerial support was with him one of serious import. The plan which he deemed the truly Methodistical one, was, simply to supply the wants of all the preachers, as well after they should become superannuated as while they were effective, and to provide to have this done without fail. Then there would be no inducement, on the one hand, to make merchandise of the gospel, nor, on the other, to abandon the field in view of being left to suffer in the decline of life. But to raise the expectations of the preachers, by

promising all this, or seeming to promise it, by setting it forth in the Discipline as allowed them, he deemed an offence against justice, whether practised upon ourselves or others. He therefore believed, that, when it became evident that the pledge made to the superannuated preachers could not or would not be redeemed, it would become an imperious duty to disannul it and change the plan. He was persuaded, however, that the time was not far distant when the Methodist people, who loved the itinerancy because God had so signally owned it in spreading scriptural holiness through the land, would deal justly toward those self-denying men who had faithfully laboured in the Lord's vineyard.

Such were the sentiments I received from John Dickens on this subject, in answer to my inquiries and suggestions. At the same time he remarked that the responsibility lay chiefly upon the preachers. The fund proposed might be productive of much good ; but the main thing was to copy more after the parent society in our pecuniary matters, a subject on which I had long thought of writing.

Although most of the preachers on this district were young in years, or the ministry, or both, and a heavy tide of opposition bore down upon us ; yet under the direction of our

divine Guide we were enabled to stem the torrent ; and at the end of each year we found that we had gained a little, and had acquired some more strength and skill to use the weapons of our spiritual warfare. At some of our quarterly meetings the sacred influence was so evidently present that it neutralized all opposition, and we seemed, as the boatman descending the Mohawk in time of flood, to have nothing to do but to guide the helm.

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#### CHAPTER XIV.

Mr. Ware attends the New-York conference in 1796—Goes with Bishop Asbury to the Philadelphia conference—Is appointed to the Philadelphia district—Attends the General Conference, which sits this year in Baltimore, before going to his district—Reflections on the feelings which the last General Conference occasioned—The secession of James O'Kelly—The spirit the party manifested—The good feelings which prevailed at this conference—Fault of neglecting to provide for the superannuated preachers—Effect of continued neglect of this matter on the itinerancy—Commendation of the practice of our English brethren on this subject—Enters upon the duties of the district—Marriage—Strasburg circuit—Great revival commences under the labours of Dr. Chandler—It spreads to other parts of the district—Becomes general and powerful.

ON the 30th of September 1796, the annual conference commenced its session in the city of New-York. From this conference I went with Bishop Asbury to the Philadelphia con-

ference, which commenced in Philadelphia on the 20th of October. Here I was appointed to the charge of the Philadelphia district, which extended from Wilmington, Delaware, to the Seneca lake, in the state of New-York.

I did not, however, enter upon the duties of my charge until after the General Conference, which commenced its session in Baltimore on the 20th of the same month.

The commencement of another General Conference was a period suitable for reflection. Four years had now elapsed since the first one, and, all things considered, the most interesting ecclesiastical council ever witnessed in this country, had been held. We had now tried the system, and had come together to review the past and confer with each other respecting the future. I was at the conference of 1792, and some of the painful sensations I felt during its session have caused me at times to wish I could forget there had been such a meeting. Christ prayed that his disciples might be one, that is, as I understand it, to "kindly think and sweetly speak the same." This was pre-eminently the case among the primitive Methodists, and especially the first Methodist preachers. But there is one sense only in which man may be said to be perfect, and

that is in *love*. Love, one apostle says, casts out fear; and another calls it the bond of perfectness. In knowledge and judgment man is imperfect, and therefore liable to err. And from adhering obstinately to views founded in error of judgment, we are sometimes led away from the simplicity of the gospel.

At the General Conference of 1792, Mr. James O'Kelly, who had long officiated as a presiding elder, and acquired very considerable influence in the Church by his labours and perseverance, introduced a proposition to this effect, namely, "After the bishop appoints the preachers at conference to their several circuits, if any think himself injured by the appointment, he shall have liberty to appeal to the conference, and state his objections; and if the conference approve his objections, the bishop shall appoint him to another circuit."

This was a delicate subject. There is nothing more contrary to the nature or inclination of man than to sacrifice his will; and yet this must be done for the preservation of order, not only by Christians, but by the citizens of any commonwealth. A sensible man, who, when under awakening, resorted to a ledge of rocks for prayer, and there found mercy, sententiously remarked in relating his



experience, "I lost my will among the rocks." To the real Christian who wishes in any capacity to be devoted wholly to the service of God, it is always pleasing to revert to the time when he lost his will. But when the adjustment of the powers of the officers in church or state is the subject of reflection, we are not always certain how far we ought to yield ourselves in voluntary submission. We may give up too much—more than the object is worth, or the exigence of the case requires.

It was allowed, on all hands, that no sacrifice could be too great to accomplish the object we had in view, namely, the salvation of souls; but the question was, whether the means were the most perfectly adapted to the accomplishment of that object. Whether for this purpose so large a body of men should hold themselves ready to go wherever the general superintendent should deem it best in his judgment to send them. The number of travelling preachers was at this time two hundred and sixty-six.

Had Mr. O'Kelly's proposition been differently managed it might possibly have been carried. For myself, at first I did not see any thing very objectionable in it. But when it came to be debated, I very much disliked the spirit of those who advocated it, and won-



dered at the severity in which the movers and others who spoke in favour of it indulged in the course of their remarks. Some of them said that it was a shame for a man to *accept* of such a lordship, much more to *claim* it; and that they who would submit to this absolute dominion must forfeit all claims to freedom, and ought to have their ears bored through with an awl, and to be fastened to their master's door and become slaves for life. One said that to be denied such an appeal was an insult to his understanding, and a species of tyranny to which others might submit if they chose, but for his part he must be excused for saying he could not. The advocates of the opposite side were more dispassionate and argumentative. They urged that Mr. Wesley, the father of the Methodist family, had devised the plan, and deemed it essential for the preservation of the itinerancy. They said that, according to the showing of brother O'Kelly, Mr. Wesley, if he were alive, ought to blush; for he claimed the right to station the preachers to the day of his death. The appeal, it was argued, was rendered impracticable on account of the many serious difficulties with which it was encumbered. Should one preacher appeal and the conference say his appointment should be altered, the Bishop

must remove some other one to make him room; in which case the other might complain and appeal in his turn; and then again the first might appeal from the new appointment, or others whose appointments these successive alterations might interrupt. Hearing all that was said on both sides, I was finally convinced that the motion for such an appeal ought not to carry.

We had now met in general conference again, and our number was one hundred and twenty. We went through our business amicably; and there was a gracious work of revival in the congregations throughout the city. As to the conference, I was pleased with the spirit in which the business was transacted, but not with all that was done, or, in other words, that something was not done which I had hoped would be done. I had hoped that some measures would be entered into by that body to retain the preachers in the itinerant ranks. During the four years between the two general conferences we had lost by location one hundred and six preachers. This appeared to me a great evil, and one that ought to be remedied. I recollected that, during the revolution, congress for a long time neglected to do any thing by way of providing a pension for those who should

remain in the service during the war; and the consequence was, that many of the best officers left when their experience and ability rendered it most desirable to keep them in it. This much distressed Gen. Washington, who remonstrated with congress, and told them that he could procure plenty of officers, but they could not supply the place of the old ones. He urged that it was unreasonable to expect that men would spend the prime of their lives in the public service, and sacrifice all the means of acquiring a competency for old age, encountering the fatigues and hardships of the camp and the perils of the field, unless some provision should be made for their comfortable support through life.

These views appeared so rational that no one could avoid feeling their force. But they appeared to me as applicable to Methodist travelling preachers as to the officers of the revolution. Their allowance is limited to what they need for their present support; and we say they shall be entitled to so much when they are worn out, or, in other words, that they shall have a specified annuity. But no adequate means are devised to raise it.

I am one who voted for the rule which says, that the church shall not be accountable for the deficiencies of the preachers in case

of debt; and yet it is not easy to conceive of any thing more sacred than the pledge made to superannuated preachers, widows, and orphans, that a *competency* shall be furnished them while they remain dependant on the church. If the effective men are neglected, they may resort to some other employment, unfriendly as it is to the interests of the church to compel them to do so, and thus prevent actual suffering from penury. But those who have worn themselves out in the service of the church, or the widows and helpless children of such for whom they have not provided, because they were exclusively devoted to the work of the ministry, what are they to do? There is cruelty in neglecting them. The rule I have named seemed to be necessary. — But I did hope some provision would be made to meet the exigency of the superannuated preachers and their dependants. I desired to see some plan adopted which would assure the preachers that they should be comfortably provided for in the decline of life. But I was disappointed. I do believe, if such a plan had been adopted and carried into effect at the commencement, we should have been a more numerous, and, perhaps, a better people than we now are. None, I think, who have examined our history, will

doubt that we have sustained much injury by the location of so many of our ministers, at a period, when they were best qualified to be useful, and the necessity of supplying their places by young and inexperienced men. When we look at the economy of the father and founder of Methodism, and of our brethren in England, we are furnished with a lesson of instruction on this subject. Few preachers, after being admitted into full connection in the British conference, are known to locate. And how do they retain them? The old men in that connection are treated with the greatest respect and tenderness; and none of them are left in the decline of life to contend with the world for bread. A competent provision is made for them, so that their sun may go pleasantly down.

After the close of the conference, I hastened to my work. The labours of the district, I was apprized, would be very severe. But through mercy I was enabled to perform them.

The first year on this district presented nothing remarkable for record. The second, however, was more propitious. A glorious religious excitement commenced on Strasburg and Chester circuits, which spread through the whole peninsula, exceeding any



thing I have ever witnessed. This revival embraced all classes—governor, judges, lawyers, and statesmen,—old and young, rich and poor—including many of the African race, who adorned their profession by a well ordered life, and some of them by a triumphant death.

For Strasburg circuit I felt a particular interest, as it had now become the place of my residence. Here I had formed an acquaintance with Miss Barbary Miller, a person whom I selected, above all others, as a suitable companion for me; and on the 15th of October, 1797, we were joined in holy matrimony, she being thirty-five years of age, and I thirty-eight. On this circuit there were some excellent members; but there had been no revival for several years. Many of the children of the early Methodists were nearly grown up, and but few of them professed religion, and some who had long prayed for a revival had become almost discouraged.

Such was the state of things on this circuit, when I prevailed on Bishop Asbury to appoint Dr. Chandler to it, as the most likely, in my estimation, to be useful in stirring up the people. Dr. Chandler was a dentist; and, at the time I obtained his consent to travel, he was reading medicine with Dr. Rush. He had



been for some time a licensed preacher. He was gifted, enterprising, and every way well qualified for the itinerant work ; and in that capacity I thought he would be most likely to be useful. I had a very particular friendship for him, as I had long known him and his habits, which I believed were such as would render him eminently successful in the work of saving souls, if he would give himself up wholly to the service of the church. I accordingly communicated with him on the subject ; but he pleaded his engagements with Dr. Rush as a barrier against his going out into the work. I accordingly waited on the venerable Rush, and expressed to him my views respecting the duty of Dr. Chandler, who perfectly agreed with me in the matter, and cheerfully released him from his engagements ; and he entered with all his soul into the work.

At the commencement of the second quarter, Dr. Chandler began covenanting with the people. He obtained a pledge from them to abstain wholly from the use of ardent spirits, and to meet him at the throne of grace three times a day, namely, at sunrise, at noon, and at the going down of the sun, to pray for a revival of the work of God on the circuit, and especially that he would visit them and

give them some token for good at their next quarterly meeting. As the time of the meeting approached, he pressed them to come out without fail, and expressed a belief that the Lord would do great things for us. Soon after he commenced this course, there were evident indications that the work was beginning to revive; and many, with the preacher, began to predict that something great would be done at the quarterly meeting.

On Saturday, many people attended. I opened the meeting by singing, and then attempted to pray; but in two minutes my voice was drowned in the general cry throughout the house, which continued all that day and night, and indeed for the greater part of three days. A great number professed to be converted, who stood fast and adorned their profession. But the best of all was, many who had lost their first love repented, and did their first works; and God restored them to his favour.

Cecil circuit had been added to the Philadelphia district. The quarterly meeting on this circuit was at hand, and I urged Dr. C. to attend it. He came with a number of the warm-hearted members from his circuit. On the first day of the meeting there were many present, and the prospect was very encourag-

ing. But there were appearances of rain, which it was thought might discourage the people from coming out in the evening. Dr. Chandler, however, pressed them to come out, saying that he believed God would be present and do wonders among them. "Some of you," he added, "will probably be kept away from the apprehension that it will rain: but, mark my word, there will be no rain in this vicinity, until the quarterly meeting is ended." I was startled at this bold prediction, and was on the point of requesting him to recall or qualify it, but finally concluded to let it pass.

Night came, and the house was crowded. A gracious work commenced. Some, of whom it was least expected, were found upon their knees crying for mercy. The morning of the sabbath was the most dark and threatening I ever saw. The clouds appeared surcharged with rain, and it was the expectation of many that Dr. C. would be proved a false prophet. But still it so turned out that the rain was withheld until the meeting closed, and the people generally had reached their homes; after which the clouds emptied themselves upon the earth, and the fall of rain exceeded any thing which had been known for many years before.

This meeting, though not equal to the one

last named, was nevertheless a very profitable one. Some twenty or thirty professed to receive an evidence of the remission of their sins, and united with the Church. From this the fire began to spread to the south, and soon the whole peninsula was in a flame of revival. At the north also the influence was felt. Sparks were kindled in Middletown, Northumberland, Wilkesbarre, and quite up in the Genesee and lake country in western New-York.

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#### CHAPTER XV.

In 1800 Mr. Ware is appointed to a district on the peninsula—Attends General Conference in Baltimore before entering on the labours of his district—Again deplores the neglect of providing for the superannuated preachers—Annual conference at Smyrna—A great revival goes on during its session, and one hundred added to the church at its close—A meeting appointed by request at Dover, to be called the yearly meeting—A season of extraordinary power and gracious influence—Family affliction—Death of a son—Leaves the district at the end of the third year, and returns to the Philadelphia district—In 1803 takes charge of Jersey district—On leaving this, two years at St. George's, in Philadelphia—Is sick—In 1809, supernumerary—In 1810, superannuated—In 1811, stationed at Lancaster—1812, is elected by the General Conference held in New-York one of the book agents—1816, appointed to Long Island—Continues effective till 1825, in all forty years.

IN 1800 I was appointed to a district on the peninsula. There were in this district ten circuits, twenty travelling preachers, and about

nine thousand members. This I deemed one of the most important charges I ever filled. With the care of all these circuits and preachers, and my dear family—a wife, child, and aged mother—I had enough to occupy all my time and attention. To my family, indeed, I could devote but a small part of my time. The fertile soil we occupied employed all our labour and care, for the fields were white to the harvest. The scenes which I witnessed at Smyrna, Dover, Milford, Centreville, Easton, and many other places, I have not ability to describe. During the times of revival in these places, thousands of all ranks were drawn to the meetings, and spent days together in acts of devotion, apparently forgetful of their temporal concerns. Should any one ask what influenced them to this, the answer is, they expected to find the Lord there, and their expectations were realized to the joy and satisfaction of their souls. Thus some came, and then returned and told others, who in turn came, and went away in like manner to inform others still. In this way the work continued to extend until it became general.

My first year on this district was one of the happiest in my whole life. My health was continually good, as was that also of my family—my wife and child. The vine we



were exerting our utmost skill to dress, grew until it shaded all the land and regaled us with odoriferous flowers and delicious fruit. Every thing went on pleasantly. The wants of the preachers were supplied with the utmost ease; and the affectionate solicitude manifested by the members for each other's happiness, and that of their fellow men, was delightful. Here, as in Tennessee, I hesitated not to call at any house when I wanted refreshment or a night's entertainment. The candle of the Lord shone brilliantly about my path; and my cup was oftentimes full to overflowing.

Previously to my entering upon the charge of this district I attended our third General Conference, which was held in Baltimore in the month of May. At this conference we had occasion of rejoicing on account of the prosperity which had attended our labours during the four years past. In the last year our number had increased three thousand five hundred and forty-three; and we had peace in all our borders. There was one thing, however, at which I was, as before I had been, deeply grieved, and wondered that a matter of such magnitude should be so slightly passed over. It was the neglect of providing some means to prevent so many locations.



During the four years which were past one hundred and twenty preachers had located; and though our ranks were filled up in numbers, our loss in age and experience was great. Of this we were sensible in my district, which at the close of the second year embraced fourteen thousand one hundred and sixty-eight members, being an increase in two years of more than six thousand.

On the second day of June our annual conference commenced its session in Smyrna. "Here," Mr. Lee says in his History, "a great work began." But it had in fact begun two years before in Pennsylvania, and had made some progress on the peninsula, though not without considerable opposition from persons of influence who did not like it, at least from the report they had heard respecting it.

At the Smyrna conference the work manifested itself in its true character, and the opposition ceased. There were persons present from almost all parts of the Eastern Shore, who witnessed the general excitement and gracious influence from the beginning to the end of the conference, during which time hundreds were converted to God. These returned home, revived in their spirits, and wondering at what they had seen, and heard, and felt; and through the instrumentality of

some of these the fires of revival were kindled up in their neighbourhoods before the preachers arrived.

At the close of this conference one hundred persons were received on trial in the church; and Governor Bassett, Dr. Ridgely, and others requested that a meeting might be appointed at Dover during the ensuing May, to be called the yearly meeting, to continue for one week. In compliance with this request the appointment was made; and the meeting was no less extraordinary than the one held at the conference. There were but few of the principal houses in this metropolis in which there were not some converted during the meeting; and more than once the whole night was employed, both in the church and private houses, in prayer for penitents, and in rejoicing with those who had obtained an evidence of pardon, or were reclaimed from their backslidings. Having the charge of this meeting, its weight would have been more than I could bear, only that I had brothers Cooper, Chandler, Spry, and many others to sustain me in the arduous task; and the best of all was, God was with us.

But a cup of unmixed felicity does not fall to the lot of any mortal in this world. On returning from my first route around the dis-

trict for the second year, I found my wife, who had been confined during my absence, exceedingly ill, and duty obliged me to remain with her for a season.

The work of the Lord was still going on rapidly; and as soon as I could leave my afflicted companion and my infant son, I hastened away to see how the garden of the Lord flourished.

Camp meetings had not yet been introduced; and we knew not what to do with the thousands who attended our quarterly meetings. Sometimes we were forced to resort to the woods, and even to hold our love-feasts in the grove. Our membership increased rapidly; but we refrained from urging any to join the Church until they had taken time to reflect and examine whether they had fully made up their minds to be religious, and could unreservedly take upon themselves the vows of their God.

After finishing my third tour around my district, on my way home I called on my friend Dr. Ridgely, and inquired if he could make it convenient to be at home on a certain day, as I wished, Providence permitting, to come down to Dover on that day and get my little son vaccinated. The doctor was a man of much feeling, and I saw that he was greatly embarrassed at my mentioning my

little son. But I was not long kept in suspense. Alas! my first-born was no more. He had died during my absence. It was a consolation to me, however, that I was not absent on my own account, but in the cause of my heavenly Master.

Before I left Philadelphia, the people were greatly excited on the subject of politics. Party spirit ran high. Mr. Adams was president; and addresses were presented to him approving his administration and promising him support. A proposition was made in our conference to address him in like manner. To this I objected. And in opposing the introduction of politics into our ecclesiastical councils, I made some remarks on the changes which would be likely to take place in the administration of our government, upon which those who were influenced by a political frenzy put such construction as suited them.

While labouring on the Eastern Shore, the political fever began to affect the people in this region; and, some how or other, my remarks came to be known to them, and I was thereby rendered exceedingly popular with one party, but lost all influence with the other. These, though they treated me with great kindness, had the address to effect my removal from the district.

In 1802, I returned to the Philadelphia district. The next year, 1803, I again took charge of the Jersey district, and continued on it four years. After this, I laboured two years in the St. George's charge, in the city of Philadelphia. In all these places I saw Methodism still on the advance, but not with the rapidity which distinguished its march on the Eastern Shore.

Toward the close of my charge in Philadelphia in 1808, I was attacked with a violent fever, and my physician deemed it proper for me to be bled. Until this time, I had not been sensible of any material decline in strength, agility, or sight; but now I could distinctly perceive failures in each of these.

In the spring of 1809, my debility was such as rendered it necessary for me to take a supernumerary relation; and the following year I was superannuated. In 1811, Lancaster Town was the field of my labour.

In 1812, the General Conference was held in New-York. At that conference, I was elected one of the book agents. I continued in this office four years, and was then appointed to Long Island. From that time, 1816, I continued to be effective till 1825, so that I was an effective travelling preacher, in all, forty years.

## CHAPTER XVI.

REFLECTIONS.—The moral condition of the country when Methodism was introduced—The adaptation of the itinerancy to the condition of the people—The character and labours of the early preachers, and the purity of their motives—Reflections on our treatment of the Indians—On our ecclesiastical organization—Misrepresentations respecting it—Mr. Wesley's letter to Bishop Asbury—Probable origin of it—Spirit of revivals—Retrospect—Concluding remarks.

WHILE the United States were yet struggling for independence, an infant sect, denominated Methodists, began to attract considerable attention. The more prominent peculiarities which distinguished them in the view of the public were, their itinerancy, and economy of ministerial support. While, in these respects, others deemed them singular, in their own estimation they were primitive. There was something peculiar also in their conceptions of truth, by which they were led to the itinerant plan, the more generally and effectually to disseminate it.

When the independence of the country was achieved, and her liberal and wholesome institutions established, there was nothing in this new world, that is, no legal impediment, to hinder the progress of the gospel. None



presumed to prescribe to others what they should believe, and how they should worship; and all were left to be guided by the dictates of their own consciences in these matters. In these respects, all things were as they should be.

While the civil institutions of the country provided for the unrestrained dissemination of evangelical truth, its moral condition loudly called for it. The sword of the Lord had fallen upon the idol shepherds, as predicted by Zechariah of old; the arm of prelacy was withered, and her right eye utterly darkened. Seeing their power and influence gone, many who occupied the place of shepherds fled and left their flocks. Then might it be said of thousands :—

“ Lost are they now, and scatter'd wide,  
In pain, and weariness, and want ;  
With no kind shepherd near to guide  
The sick, and spiritless, and faint.”

There was then a fair opportunity for those who were zealous for God, to exert themselves in seeking the lost sheep of the house of Israel; and soon the voices of scores and hundreds of the Methodists were heard extending to every quarter of the new empire, and proclaiming that Christ, in whose blood all men have redemption, came into the world

to save even the chief of sinners, and inviting all to come unto him and be saved.

None but those who were eye-witnesses of the scenes transpiring in those days, can fully appreciate the advantages of the Methodist itinerancy to our scattered population. It was spread out over a vast territory of country, and constantly extending ; and in most places the settlements were too small and poor to support a settled minister. In many instances, too, in the new countries, they were without the regular forms of law, bound together only by social intercourse and common interest. But none of these places were too small, or too poor, or too remote from the older settlements, or too destitute of orderly government, to be found out and regularly visited by the Methodist preachers. They went out into the highways and hedges, seeking the most destitute and needy, and were successful in establishing the institutions of the gospel among them. There are some still living who remember the quickening, regenerating, and sanctifying influence, which attended the promulgation of the glad tidings of peace by these heralds of the cross. So mightily grew the word of the Lord, that multitudes both of men and women believed and were added to the church, inso-much that, in one-half century, they have

increased to half a million. O that they may so live, that it may always be said of them, "This people have I formed for myself—they shall show forth my praise."

With feelings which cannot be described, I recall to mind those happy days of primitive Methodism, when a young and growing band of Christians and Christian ministers were labouring together in the common cause, and united by feelings of Christian sympathy and affection infinitely stronger than the ties of blood. A loquacious man was descanting the other day in my hearing on the pleasures of friendship. He congratulated himself as the happiest man in the world, because, he said, he did not know that he had an enemy on earth. Well, then, thought I, does it follow that all men are our friends, because we do not know that we have any enemies? Friendship is not so unmeaning a thing. Many who know us may cherish no enmity against us, while at the same time they feel no sympathy or friendship for us. If without their assistance we can get any thing good we may be permitted to enjoy it without incurring their envy or malignity. But they care nothing about us; so, if we be overtaken with a storm of adversity, or be driven into the disheartening regions of cheerless poverty, or sink under

the gloom of a hopeless despondency, it is the same to them—they have no feeling on our account. Are these friends? Not such as are ever present to my mind while contemplating the scenes of 1784, '5 and '6,—the members, and especially the ministers, of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In connection with them one could not fail to appreciate the truth of this axiom,—“He who has friends can never be alone in prosperity or adversity.” The nominal friend, like the priest and the Levite, will pass by on the other side ; but the true friend will bind up our wounds, and pour in the oil and the wine.

The preachers in those days had many things to suffer—many dangers and toils to pass through. Those who went into the great valley were often in jeopardy from the red men of the forest, who saw their primitive possessions wasting away before the white man's approach, and were frequently stimulated by a sense of the wrongs they were suffering to sell their inheritance at the dearest possible rate. Savage-like, in the paroxysms of their fury, they would wreak their vengeance alike upon the innocent and the guilty ; and many hapless families, children and all, were slaughtered or led into captivity by them. As I have said before, my own

path has been infested by these ferocious sons of the forest, so that I narrowly escaped; but I could never find it in my heart to acquit the white man of all blame in this matter and cast it upon the natives. The history of their wrongs and their sufferings is familiar to all intelligent Americans; and who, knowing how they have been treated from the beginning—in what manner the soil which we cultivate in peace has been obtained from them—does not feel a wish that some just compensation may be rendered to them? From the readiness which this interesting people have manifested to receive the gospel, and the evidence of its saving and sanctifying efficacy upon them, we are sustained in the opinion that they might have been Christianized and civilized from the first, had proper measures been pursued toward them. And how God-like would it have been, had men come to them with the Bible in their hands, and hearts glowing with love and pity; and, instead of robbing them of their inheritance and exciting their hostility, taught them the principles of pure Christianity, and baptized them in the name of the Holy Trinity! I sometimes figure to myself a nation of red men, enjoying the institutions of Christianity and civilization—educated in the sciences, and adorned



with all that dignifies the noblest work of God—and inquire, “Might not the aborigines of this country now have presented such a nation if they had been properly dealt with?” In native sagacity, heroic fortitude, and eloquence, they are not surpassed by any people in the world. What, then, could prevent their becoming a refined, moral, and Christian people?

With all we had to suffer, a single motive, to serve God and save souls, has actuated the body of Methodist preachers from the beginning; and, as I have before said, there was one who knew that it was our highest ambition to keep the church pure, and to devote ourselves wholly to the work. In view of this, we loved the rules drawn up by Mr. Wesley for the preachers, and cordially adopted them at the Christmas conference by a unanimous vote. These rules are so excellent in their composition, and admirably adapted to the promotion of sound morality and practical piety, that we may challenge a comparison of them with any thing found among the different denominations of Christians. It is true that some of them are peculiar to an itinerant preacher; and I am prepared to say, after an experience of nearly half a century, that among all whom I have known, those



preachers who have observed the rules most closely and conscientiously have been the most happy and useful; all who have neglected or violated them have suffered loss; and some entirely fallen away.

It is not to be supposed that all the measures adopted by the Church at its organization were perfectly satisfactory to all who took part in the deliberations of the conference at which they were adopted. I am not therefore going to enter into a minute and unqualified defence of all that was done on that occasion. But the motives which influenced the ministry to retain the modifications and conduct of the itinerancy in their own hands were pure; and I may offer a few remarks respecting them.

We were *itinerants*; and he whose servants we were knoweth that we were influenced by a desire to spread scriptural holiness through the land, and to preserve the ministry and membership pure from error and sin. The plan of a general superintendency had not only been submitted to, but was universally approved by both preachers and people. The system was simple and familiar to us all. Every thing went on as it had before our organization, with this advantage, that in our church capacity the delightful privilege was

furnished us of bringing our children to be dedicated in baptism at our own altars, and of receiving the sacrament of the Lord's supper at the hand of our own ministers. Ordination was the only thing we had seemed to lack ; and this lack was now supplied.

That our ecclesiastical polity and discipline were not formed on the model of our civil institutions, or that of other churches, we well knew ; but we did believe, and so did our people, that it was expedient to form them as we did, in order to keep the itinerant system in operation. And as this was a paramount object, it was wisdom to conform the general organization in a way to accomplish it. In this, also, we followed what we thought to be the plain view taken of the whole subject by Mr. Wesley, the father of the Methodist family, and the founder of the itinerancy. We did not deny the right to any people to choose their pastors, or to have lay representatives in their ecclesiastical councils if they saw proper. But it was evident to us, that if our societies should demand this they would assume a fearful responsibility, as it must subvert the itinerancy at the foundation, and overthrow the whole system. But this they had no disposition to do, and they understood the effect of such a course, and prized the

plan for its intrinsic excellency and efficient operation too much to wish any thing done to injure it. Moreover we knew, and our people knew, that we were wholly dependent on them for our support; and that they could wield this check over us at any time they might deem it necessary. Such was the talk among ourselves and among the most intelligent of our people at the time. We assumed nothing, made no new terms of communion, (except one relating to slavery which we could never enforce, and were obliged to rescind,) and so far were we from discarding Mr. Wesley, that we said, during his life we would be subject to him as his sons in the gospel, and, in matters belonging to church government, obey his instructions. In this we undoubtedly went too far. But it was from the best of motives. We loved Mr. Wesley, and as far as it was consistent to be subject to any individual under similar circumstances, we delighted to serve him. But he was a man, and was several thousand miles from us; and he might become prejudiced against us by misinformation or otherwise, and direct what, if he knew us better, he would not. Still in the ardour of our love and zeal we did not enter extensively into such reflections.

Had I been told at the Christmas confer-

ence, that before I should go hence men would rise up among us, calling themselves Methodists, who would endeavour to make the world believe such things as I have seen put forth to the public and dogmatically asserted as truth, I would have replied, "No, it cannot be; none can ever be found to cogitate, or even retail, so foul a slander!" But I have learned how easy it is to place too much confidence in men.

These allegations have been amply refuted by Dr. Emory, in his work entitled "Defence of our Fathers," so that it would seem needless to say any thing bearing on that subject; yet, having had a long and intimate knowledge of Messrs. Asbury and Coke, an old friend who made a considerable journey to see me and converse with me respecting those times, has satisfied me that I ought to state what I know in reference to these matters of which so much has been said. "Were you not," inquired my friend, "a member of the Christmas conference?" I replied that I was. "How did it happen then," he continued, "that you suffered Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury to introduce into your Discipline statements which were false in themselves? They could not have done it," continued he, "without your knowledge." After thus intro-

ducing the subject, he proceeded to say, that there were a number in his vicinity who were publishing such statements respecting those men, and their conduct in regard to the organization of the Church. "There is one," said he, "who has long been a local preacher, that publicly affirms these things, and says that Asbury did more harm to the Americans by introducing Episcopacy than was ever done by that arch infidel, Tom Paine." He further remarked that they were in the habit of industriously circulating these statements through the press, in pamphlet form, and otherwise, without taking any notice of the refutations they had received; and that, knowing I was acquainted with the events of those days, he had an earnest desire to see me, and hear what I had to say with respect to these things.

I perceived from what my friend said that the insinuations which had been made, that Mr. Wesley was dissatisfied with Mr. Asbury, and soured against him, on account of his taking the name of bishop, and therefore rebuked him as acting contrary to what he intended, had made some unfavourable impressions on the minds of sincere and well meaning persons; and this fact, among others, induced me to comply with his request.



Of Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury I can say, I believe, from my intimate acquaintance with them, that they were as pure in morals and motives as Mr. Wesley himself—they were incapable of the acts ascribed to them. They were, indeed, men, and as men liable to err. But that they aspired to obtain power with which it was not the will of Mr. Wesley and the conference to invest them, is an imputation which no one as intimately acquainted with them as I was, could believe for a moment. Nor was the Christmas conference composed of a class of men to be so easily imposed upon. They understood the subject in all its bearings; and no consideration would have induced them, at that juncture, to barter away their rights and privileges, especially in a manner contrary to what they understood to be the views and instructions of Mr. Wesley.

That Mr. Asbury did receive a letter containing the language of rebuke from the man whom he delighted to serve and honour, I knew soon after he received it; and I knew also to whom he ascribed the work of souring the mind of his father and friend against him. He afterward informed me that he had received a letter from Mr. Wesley, in which he said, "I am nevertheless glad that you



remained in America, and rejoice that the Lord has opened so wide a door before you."

Mr. Asbury did not name the man who, he thought, had done him the unkindness of endeavouring to disaffect Mr. Wesley's mind toward him. But I thought I knew to whom he alluded. He was an elder brother, a chief man among the preachers while in this country, and a high-toned loyalist. After the declaration of independence, he deemed it his duty and that of all the preachers sent by Mr. Wesley to America, to return home. Not being able to prevail on Mr. Asbury to accompany him, he forsook his charge, and went over within the British lines, they being then in possession of Philadelphia; and there he declared from the pulpit that he did not believe God would revive his work in America, until the people submitted to their rightful sovereign, the king of England; and he expressed himself, in similar terms to Mr. Asbury in a letter. In reply, Mr. Asbury said, he was so strongly knit in affection to many of the Americans that he could not tear himself away from them; that he knew the Americans, and was well satisfied they would not rest until they had achieved their independence; and plainly intimated that he believed they would become a free and inde-

pendent nation, and that there was a great work to be accomplished in this country, under the direction of Divine Providence, through the instrumentality of Methodist preaching. The letter from Mr. Asbury containing these remarks providentially fell into the hands of the American officers, and was the unpremeditated cause of changing their views and feeling respecting him, so that he was afterward treated with more favour than he had been before. Of this fact I was informed by a man who was afterward governor of the state of Delaware.

The preacher to whom Mr. Asbury attributed the agency of endeavouring to disaffect Mr. Wesley's mind toward him had, from the first, suspected him of being favourable to the cause of the Americans; and when he became fully satisfied of it, he manifested strong opposition of feeling against him. And, besides this, Mr. Asbury had offended him in debate in conference on the spirit of the Americans. This was a delicate subject to be discussed at that time, as there were some preachers as warm on the side of freedom as this elder brother was against it. In his remarks he said, he had been at the south, and was alarmed at the noise—the wild enthusiasm—which he had witnessed in the south-

ern states ; that a stop must absolutely be put to the prevailing wild-fire, or it would prove ruinous to all we held sacred ; and that he had done all he could to suppress it, but was ashamed to say that some of his brethren, the preachers, were infected with it. In this, he alluded to the peculiar character of some of the great revivals then going on at the south. Mr. Asbury became alarmed at these imprudent remarks, and interposed to put a stop to them in a way which was alike gratifying to the preachers generally, and mortifying to the person concerned. He evidently returned to England with no very kind disposition toward Mr. Asbury ; and with such feelings as he cherished would not be likely to make a very favourable representation of him to Mr. Wesley. This was probably the source of the letter which has been used in so exceptionable a manner, since the death of both these holy men, between whom malignity itself could not effect a permanent breach, however it might for a season weaken confidence, and produce an unwonted jealousy.

On the subject of the spirit which attended the revivals then in progress, Mr. Asbury used to say, "The friends of order may allow a guilty mortal to tremble at God's word, for to such the Lord will look ;—and the saints

to cry out and shout, when the Holy One of Israel is in the midst of them. To be hasty in plucking up the tares, is to endanger the wheat. Of this we should be aware, lest we touch the ark to our own injury and that of others."

Much was said in those days on the subject of order, especially by professors in other churches. On this subject they erred by mistaking the order of man for the order of God. God has his own way in carrying on his marvellous works in the earth; and they who would serve him in simplicity, must mark that way, and not fight against him.

I once knew a pious female, a member of a church, remarkable for her good sense and propriety of conduct, who was constrained, under a pathetic address of her minister, to cry out and shout aloud. The effect was thrilling. Numbers in the congregation trembled and wept. The minister, however, sharply rebuked her, and told her to be silent, or to leave the house. She chose the latter, and immediately retired to a grove, where, without rebuke or interruption, she could give vent to the swelling emotions of her pious heart. Had the minister continued his address instead of checking the impulse of feeling uttered by this devoted Christian, and

called upon those who were weeping and trembling, to humble themselves before God, and seek his mercy, and the pious part of the congregation to unite in prayer for them, he would no doubt have had a great and glorious revival of religion, and many souls would have been rescued from the thralldom of sin. But setting his face against the first manifestations of God's special presence among the people, the serious impressions which some had soon died away; and the good woman who would have been a valuable helper to him if the revival had gone on, was set down as an enthusiast. Thus was she restrained while she continued in connection with that church. In process of time, however, she removed to another place, where she opened her doors for Methodist preaching, and was the first to join class when an opportunity was offered. After this, she lived long as a nursing mother in our Zion, greatly beloved and respected by all who knew her.

From the diary of this excellent person I took, by permission, the following extracts, relating to the grove in which she retired for devotion:—

“The grove to which I fled from the rebuke of my minister, for disturbing what he called the order of God, where nevertheless



the presence of my God, which attended me, shone so bright that its foliage seemed tinged with his glory, was long my favourite retreat. Here were lofty trees, whose cooling umbrage, in the sultry season, I often enjoyed, and whose towering leafless heads I have seen in winter wave to Him who bid them be, and I ardently desired to be as pure from sin as they.

“The last time I visited this delightful recess, on the one side a marshy swamp through which no one could pass, and on the other an open wood through which none could approach unseen, (for I wished to be unseen by all but Heaven,) I renewed my covenant with God, and received a delightful assurance that he would go with me in the way I was about to go;—and, retiring, I cast back on this rural temple a last and lingering look, and, sighing, said, ‘Adieu! *adieu*, ye trembling aspens, emblems of myself, ye tremble without fear, corroding fear! Adieu, ye towering poplars, oaks, and elms! ye sweet magnolias, and ye mantling vines, adieu! Beneath your ample shade I’ve sat, I’ve knelt, I’ve sung, and shouted out, Amen! without rebuke, and made you witnesses of my solemn vows to Him whose sacred hands were fastened to a tree, and whose blood I hold to be the source, the price, the sum, of all my hopes,



for time and for eternal ages. Hallelujah! the Lord God omnipotent reigneth!"

In 1832, I attended the General Conference in Philadelphia. After it closed, I made the following communication to the Christian Advocate and Journal, which was published in its columns:—

On the first day of May last, I took my seat in the General Conference with sentiments and sensibilities that would have made me happy in a desert or a dungeon. With a palpitating heart, I surveyed the representatives of more than half a million of Methodists, bound together by ties more sacred than the ties of blood; but among all these there was not one of that band of brothers who originally constituted the Methodist Episcopal Church—no not one! all had been shrouded in the grave or in the shade before my name was transferred to the superannuated list.

All to whom I was personally known, except a few old men, on shaking me by the hand, called me father. And if I may be allowed to take that appellation, where is the man since the flood who has lived to see so numerous a family grow up around him? Did I hear one say, that would be arrogance, indeed, to number among thy sons the Methodist sanhedrim, with the venerable M'Ken-

dree at their head, whose discriminating and descriptive powers, though trembling on his staff, still charm his listening auditors—with his coadjutors, whose well-earned fame in the Church is all abroad? That be far from thee.

And was it never known that sons surpassed their sires? But I am not afraid. No one will deem it arrogance in me to say, of all this goodly group in the itinerant ranks, I am the first; that is to say, I am one of those who went before to smooth the rugged way for those who came to rear the tender plant, whose seed had been deposited by their fore-runners, and to reap the field made ready to their hands.

When the conference closed its session, I said to myself, This has been to me the most interesting General Conference I have attended, except the first. I could not help being gratified that the ratio of delegates had not been reduced, for I did not doubt but that the coming together of such a body of ministers, of the M. E. Church, in Philadelphia, would be for the glory of God. They were men, and, of course, not without defects; but such a body of men, so talented and so richly imbued with missionary zeal, have, in my estimation, seldom been together.

Our number, it is true, was rather large

for the despatch of business. All was not done that I wished, but I have lived to believe it were better to do too little than too much. Our sky was generally clear. True, some clouds did arise, and slight electric shocks were felt, causing some painful solicitude, which soon subsided—for our excellent presidents, who lived in the entire confidence and esteem of their brethren, to whom they were personally known, could easily allay the rising storm. The men over whom they presided well understood the nature, the necessity, and the desirableness of Christian amity. They had been in the habit of telling their auditors that unity among brethren was more beautiful than the morning, sweeter than the breath of spring, and richer than the Peruvian mines; and when admonished, you are now, brethren, beginning to feel and act unworthy of yourselves, they stood reprov'd, and the gust of feeling, which, had it been indulg'd, would have distort'd the face, rack'd the breast, and alarm'd the spectators, soon died away, and there was a great calm: "Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be call'd the children of God." Several things conspired to render this meeting agreeable to me. My health was better than it had been for years, insomuch that I felt no distressing lassitude,

though generally at my post in the conference, in committee, and at preaching. I heard with pleasure many whose voices I shall never hear again in time, and said, in my heart, "The best of all is, God is with us."

I have often heard it said, Past time seems short, just like a well-told tale, or like a dream when one awakes. Not so to me. To me past time seems long, and so I sometimes think it must, in fact, appear to others. Many of my brethren seemed pleased to see among them one who had a voice in the organization of the Church in 1784, not without some surprise that I should have breasted the storms of life for so long a time, and was still able to take a seat among them. Did not past time to these, at least, seem long?

I was gratified, not flattered, I think, to find my few sketches of our early history had given pleasure to many. After I became an itinerant, had I carefully attended to the rules of a preacher in our excellent form of Discipline, "Be diligent; never be unemployed; never while away time; neither spend any more time at any place than is strictly necessary." Had I done this, there would have been no want of knowledge in my ministerial career. The harmony of the past and present had never been lost, and, instead of a

sketch, I might have given at least a complete portraiture of Methodism up to the present day. Moreover, such is our predilection for the past, as to render precious every fragment that portrays some characteristic feature, especially of the venerable dead whom we have known and loved; nor of these alone, but of all who have deserved well of their fellow-men. Let those who read, and especially my young itinerant brethren, understand and act accordingly. Much may be gained by thinking with the pen, but let them not be content with a general knowledge of the language in which they think, but study its minutiae before the frost of age forbids a genial growth.

The General Conference manifested an undeviating attachment to the plan of general superintendency, and were, I think, happy in the choice they made of two additional superintendents. It is now ended, and my brethren have gone to the four quarters of our widely extended work, and my love, my prayers, and my ardent wishes have gone with them. God is love, and as he is, so are we in this world. He, it is true, is an unbeginning, never ceasing, and a for ever overflowing ocean; in this respect, we are not like him; but if there is a drop of this boundless ocean in our hearts, it flows out in a

thousand channels, pursuing its object over lands and floods, without the least diminution of the original drop. Some variation in minor things we have known, but love has predominated, has so softened and mixed the shades that, when we parted, as when we met, all was peace and good will. To God be all the glory. Such were my reflections at the conclusion of the General Conference in 1832.

I am now approaching toward the close of my earthly pilgrimage; and I may presume to say, that there are few of my fellow-Christians who are more deeply affected with the signs of the times than I am. The zeal manifested for the promulgation of the gospel throughout the world, and the enterprises set on foot for the promotion of experimental godliness, I firmly believed more than half a century ago would characterize this age, though I might not live to see it. Before I knew the Methodists, I had heard that they claimed to be raised up of God to spread scriptural holiness through the land; and this claim had been denounced as monstrous arrogance. But the first time I attended their preaching, and listened with interest to it, the effect it produced upon my mind and that of others, satisfied me that God was with them, and would render them instrumental



in stirring up such a spirit as we witness at this day.

In this my expectations have been realized. It has pleased God to permit me to live to see it, and to mark its progress, which affords me more satisfaction in my decline of life, than all the wealth or honours of the world could do. Methodism has been from the beginning a peculiarly missionary system. The operations of the day I regard as only an extension of this system, varied and modified to meet the openings of Providence for the universal spread of the gospel throughout the world. May God hasten the day when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of his glory, as the waters cover the sea.

For many years that are past, I have sighed and said, "I alone am left of all my father's house." A short time since, I made a visit to the place where I was born. I found one only of my early companions, and he was trembling on his staff. At first he did not know me, though we were particular friends. And where are those who, in 1783, filled the itinerant ranks? Are any of them left? Not one. All of them were in their graves, or in the shade, before I retired. Yet a little while and I shall go the way of all flesh.

And what, the reader may inquire, is my hope for the future?

For this life I have little to excite my hope. I cannot expect to be released from putting my feeble powers in requisition to supply my daily wants. I do hope, however, to be sustained, let the remnant of life's current flow as it may. But of future bliss in heaven, I have a strong and well-grounded expectation. Whatever claims I may suppose myself to have upon the justice of my fellow-men, for whose salvation I have ardently laboured, I have none on God, except through him "who was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Through his merits and mercies, I have a well-grounded hope of a glorious immortality beyond this vale of tears.

THE END.













